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Calvinist Contact

November 13, 1987 / 43rd year of publication / No. 2093

Overground Railroad steams from south-west U.S. to Canada

Marian Van Til

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — The Church of the Servant (COS) in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is responsible for bringing five endangered Central American refugees into Canada. It managed to do this by using a "railroad" to Canada.

The Overground Railroad (ORR) was started four-and-one-half years ago by one man, Julius Belzer, and has grown to a network of Christians in various denominations from Texas to Michigan.

Jim Dekker, a missionary for five years in Guatemala and now pastor of Covenant Christian Reformed Church, Edmonton, helped connect COS church members with the ORR.

Refugees are sent to Canada because (so far) the Canadian government has been far more willing than the U.S. has been to believe that refugees from El Salvador, Guatamala, and other strife-ridden countries are fleeing torture and possible death, instead of simply looking for economic benefits.

A legal network

Overground Railroad is a "connection maker," according to COS member Helen Bonzelaar. It brings refugees into the U.S. and Canada legally. In this it differs from the Sanctuary movement, though it has some sympathy with that movement.

There are two programs which are part of Overground Railroad: Its regular program assists those who "have a good prospect of being accepted into Canada," says Ed Laarman, Minister of Education and Witnessing at Calvin CRC, Grand Rapids. Laarman learned of the

Continued on page 2 ...

Photo: UPPACA/SYGMA

Contra soldiers confront a countryman.

Thinkbit

We do not want a church that will move with the world. We want a church that will move the world.

G.K. Chesterton

Runaways come from middle class, church neighbourhoods

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO, Ont. — Christians who saw the two-hour CBC television special "Runaways — 24 Hours on the Street" on Sept. 9 should look at where the runaway street kids come from and what they can do about the problem at its source, says Rick Tobias, Director of Evergreen, the outreach to street kids of Yonge Street Mission in the heart of Toronto.

Tobias works on a daily basis with Toronto's runaway street kids through the 90-year-old interdenominational Christian rescue mission. He says the teenagers he sees on the Yonge Street strip come from middle class families in the suburbs and small towns of Canada, not from poor families on welfare in the inner city. The problem is not family poverty but is usually family rejection and neglect, punctuated by physical and sexual abuse.

The CBC special on runaways showed gripping scenes of runaway teenagers on the streets of Toronto, Vancouver, Halifax and Edmonton over a period of 24 hours. Tobias says that the special is true to what he sees on Yonge Street except that, in his opinion, it overdramatized the place of prostitution and drugs in the street culture. Although these problems are common on the street, most kids are just trying to survive in a very tough environment, trying to get enough to eat and a place to sleep. There is a lot of violence in the street culture, but few violent deaths, though those that happen get headline publicity.

Two types of street kids

Tobias identifies two types of street kids. Many come from mainstream Canadian families which function fairly well but can use some "tuning up." Kids from such families may run away from home one to 10 times, and may spend some weeks or months on the downtown strip, but they will return home in cold weather. They come from stable families, and if you leave these kids alone, they'll eventually go home.

The others are hard core street kids who spend winters on the strip. They come from homes that are not fit places for children to grow up. It is easy to see why they readily get caught up in prostitution — a recent study in Toronto by Covenant House shows that 73 per cent of these girls and 38 per cent of the boys were sexually abused in their own homes. Overall in Canada, studies show that 25 per cent of girls and 10 per cent of boys endure sexual abuse at home. These hard core street kids have nowhere to go if they are teenagers out of school who have never learned to hold a job.

A suburban ministry

"The Evergreen outreach of the Yonge Street Mission is a ministry to a suburban problem," says Tobias. The street kids run away from communities where Canada's Christian churches are functioning, from the cities and towns where we all live. The runaway street kids in cities like Toronto, Vancouver, Halifax and Edmonton used to be our neighbours. Places like Yonge Street are the end result of the problem, not the problem itself. To illustrate his point Tobias says that a Toronto street kid who recently received some newspaper publicity has a father who is a doctor and a mother who is a lawyer. Tobias pleads with churches to address themselves to the problem at its source.

Churches in the suburbs and small towns need to help turn the tap off, to stem the flow to the big city strips. The church must become church in its own neighbourhood. Churches don't want to do this — they prefer to minister to the budget-paying flock who drive a few miles to church. Tobias wants churches to follow the pattern of Jesus, who went around healing as He preached. Churches need to recover a sense of the whole gospel for the people who are hurting in the shadow of the church's steeple, he asserts.

Churches should be involved in all community activities in their area, because that's where we meet people, Tobias continues. Ask where are the hurts in the community. Look for children who are giving problems — that will show you where the troubles are, and you may be identifying potential runaways. Hurting people respond gratefully in their vulnerability. Runaways and street kids are not only a result of family breakdown but to an extent also a result of breakdown in the church's willingness to be *church* in its own neighbourhood.

And the problem is growing. Tobias says the number of street kids is increasing faster than agencies can deal with them. Seaton House, a Toronto hostel for homeless and transient men, used to serve primarily men in their 40s and 50s, but now most are in their early 20s. Tobias wans to stop the flow of kids at the source. He concludes that teenage drugs and prostitution in the downtown strips is not a reflection on the cities but on the suburbs and small towns.

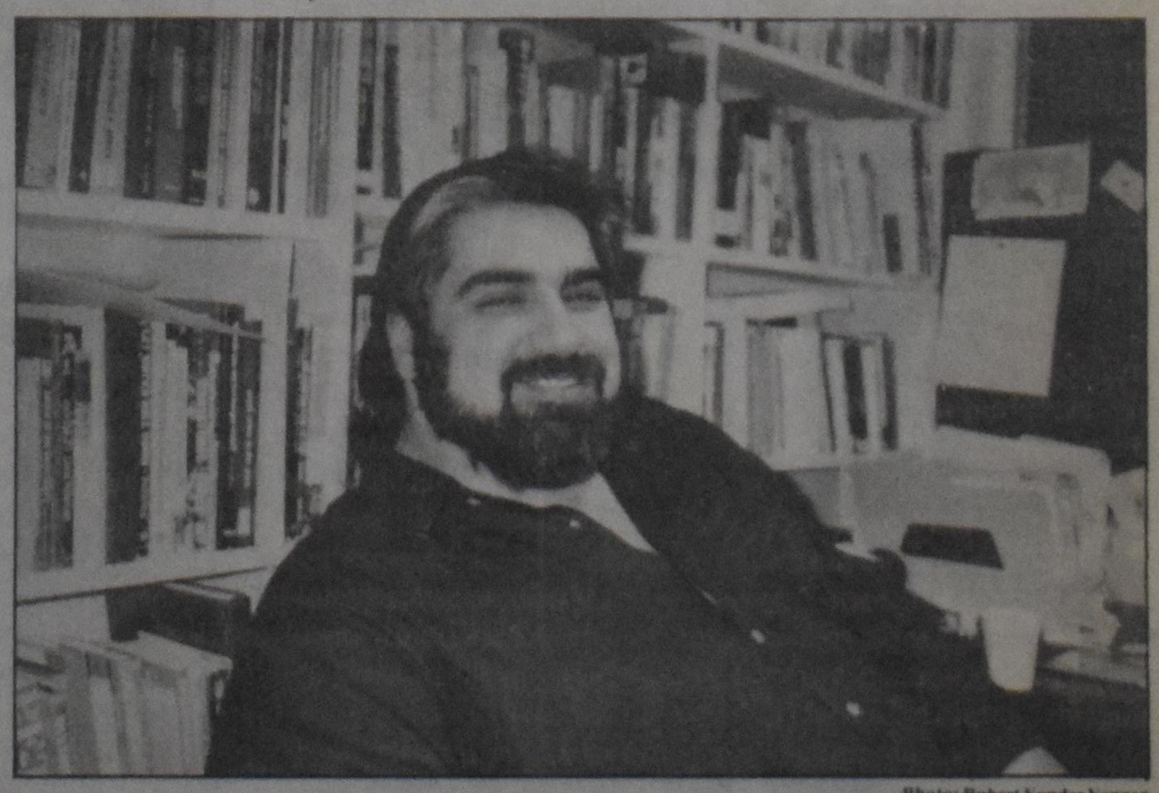

Photo: Robert Vander Vennen

Rick Tobias: "Runaways come from the church neighbourhood."

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The "Horn of Africa" is not a horn-of-plenty p.10
Ron Rupke recounts the story of Christian action "After the conversion" 11

News

"Overground Railroad"

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Railroad through a friend at Church of the Servant.

Another side of ORR is its Provisional Legal Refugee program which is "for those who have been kept in detention (in Texas), who have a harder time proving they face dangerous situations [in their native countries], or who lack documentation," Laarman explains.

ORR help often includes legal aid, housing, aculturation, friendship and spiritual aid in the process of the move from Central America to the U.S. and then to Canada.

Helen Bonzelaar is a prime example of a caring aid provider. She and her husband Ken have housed all five of the refugees who are now in Canada. "They are people fleeing for their lives," Helen explains. "But they have the potential to live productive lives." She has seen plenty of proof of that.

She tells of Julio, a Salvadoran who is now in Vancouver. His wife, Martha, and four children are still in San Salvador. Helen contacted a CRC missionary there who began visiting Martha. She was eager for that contact, and equally eager to hear the gospel. She is still receiving emotional and spiritual support from the missionary.

Meanwhile, Julio and others are working — and waiting — to bring his family to Vancouver. (A refugee must have lived in Canada for one year before he or she can send for relatives.)

When Julio first landed in Vancouver he had a bad time. He lived alone in a cheap hotel and met with thugs. He now lives with other refugees.

Cross-border care

Julio's plight demonstrated to COS members the need for the "Railroad" to continue its tracks across the U.S.-Canadian border. The Bonzelaars did not want Manuel, 29, their current refugee resident, to meet with a similar "welcome." With that in mind, Helen contacted Arie Van Eek at the Christian Reformed Church's Canadian headquarters in Burlington, Ontario.

Van Eek, his daughter and son-in-law Shirlene and Mike Abma (who live in Grand Rapids), and CR World Relief Committee spokesperson Peter Zwart, were "extremely helpful; they were great," says Helen. Van Eek contacted Ambassador CRC in Windsor, explaining the situation. On Nov. 3, some of Manuel's Grand Rapids friends took him to Windsor where he was received warmly by Ambassador members.

Manuel, like Julio, has a wife and family (two children) from whom he has been separated for a long time. His younger brother, Israel, has just arrived at the Bonzelaars.

Israel's route to Grand Rapids was a perilous one. Both men are Seventh Day Adventists who believe Christians should not bear arms. That becomes an impossible dilemma when one lives in a country in which men of all ages can be (and are) forcefully conscripted to fight, right off the street. Israel, still in school at age 20 due to the constant turmoil, took the "long route" one day and fled via Guatemala. He was picked up by three people smugglers known as the *coyote*.

For four days he rode a bus, and was fed only crackers and water. He and 22 others were secreted across the Mexican-U.S. border, then thrown into a disused garage in San Benito, Texas. Word was gotten to Manuel in Grand Rapids that Israel would be released for $1,000.

That initiated a time of much prayer and discussion between Manuel and friends at Church of the Servant and Calvin College. A lawyer in Texas was consulted. Students offered to raise the money if Manuel chose to go that route. At last Manuel decided that he should *not* pay the ransom. It was too much money; there would be no guarantee that the refugees-turned-hostage would be released; it would not be Christian to support such buying and selling of human beings, though one of those people was his brother. Manuel, with the support of the Bonzelaars and others, came to the agonizing conclusion that he must instead contact the U.S. Border Patrol.

The patrol jailed the *coyote* and released the hostages, *none of whom were deported*. That reaction is so uncharacteristic that Helen is convinced "it was a miracle." "It's incredible." In addition, Israel was given assurances that he would not have to stay in Texas for the trial of the smugglers, and, in fact, he arrived in Michigan just as Manuel was heading to Ontario.

Received much

As with many acts of Christian charity, Helen Bonzelaar has experienced that she has gained as much as her hospitality has given to others.

"The most exciting thing for me is to see the body of Christ being unified. We're finding a common ground with Mennonites, for example (via the Mennonite Central Committee)."

"Suddenly a Seventh Day Adventist is important to Christian Reformed people," Helen continues. "Suddenly a CRC missionary in Guatemala is a prayer concern for Church of the Servant; the Canadians in Burlington are part of the family in a renewed way; and the students at Calvin [College] are also involved."

Bonzelaar's life has changed in another dramatic way. She is an artist — a metalsmith and jeweller — and chairperson of the art department at Calvin College. Her art, she says, has undergone a real transformation since her Central American connection began about a year ago. Her heightened awareness of complex Third World politics, war's destruction and its consequent human suffering has changed her "whimsical bangles" into something more sober and reflective, using military imagery.

Helping Julio, Manuel, Israel and the others has been a "conversion experience," she muses. "It's dramatic; it leaves one changed." She sums it up, "Manuel really helped us focus on what's important in life."

Correction

In last week's article on the Reil organ in Ancaster, three lines were missing. It appears that a section of the paste-up that goes to the printers had fallen off in transit. For those who would like to keep the article and see it completed we hereby supply the missing lines:

There is a lot of satisfaction in shaping primary materials which a few years ago were only ...

All you have to do is write these lines in and the story is complete.

Editor

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BETWEEN THE LINES

Socio-political comment by Gus Polman, Richard Vanderkloet, William van Geest, Clarence Joldersma

Coffee cups and firmaments

High above the wispy clouds that lazily float across the sky on a beautiful summer day is an invisible layer of material called ozone that protects humans from harmful ultraviolet rays. Although not as majestic as billowing thunder-clouds or as picturesque as fluffy cumulus clouds, the ozone layer does its invisible task of keeping us from getting skin cancer by filtering out most of the sun's ultraviolet rays. Without the ozone layer, life on earth would be seriously threatened. God created the earth with a protective, life-sustaining shield. Ozone in the upper atmosphere is essential for life.

However, all is not well with the ozone layer. According to a recent *Maclean's* article, the ozone layer is thinning out, and in places there appear to be "holes" in the layer. In particular, and especially alarming, is the gigantic hole (almost the size of the U.S.) in the ozone layer over Antarctica. Researchers have found a decrease in ozone here of 40 per cent during the last 10 years. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, a worldwide reduction of as little as 2.5 per cent in the ozone layer may cause an additional 15,000 skin cancer-related deaths. That God-given life shield, the ozone layer, is seriously being threatened.

Although some people claim that climatic changes have caused the ozone to thin, most researchers agree that the threat to the ozone layer is caused by manmade chemicals called chloroflorocarbons (CFCs). CFCs are essentially a group of carbon atoms that have chlorine and flourine atoms attached to them at strategic places. CFCs are used as propellants in hairsprays and deodorants as well as in the production of foam products such as insulation, styrofoam cups, and fast food containers. Although CFCs are relatively harmless to humans directly, they cause havoc in the ozone layer. The chlorine atoms come off the CFCs and attack ozone molecules, breaking them apart and making them unable to filter out ultraviolet rays. Although it may take up to five years for the CFC to get up to the ozone layer, a chlorine molecule from one CFC can destroy up to 100,000 ozone molecules. The seemingly harmless CFCs are a definite threat to life on earth.

Cheap killer

Recently the United Nations Environment Program sponsored a conference in Montreal that dealt with the problem of reducing the world's CFC production. The conference formalized a treaty to halve CFC emissions by 1994. The resolution will be difficult to enforce, however, for the use of CFCs is much less expensive and more cost efficient than non-polluting substitutes; it would cost industry billions of dollars to change, although the technology to do so is already here. The "idol" of economic growth, the "sacred cow" of job security, and the magical pull of convenience products all are difficult barriers to overcome in the implementation of this treaty. However, the health risk in continuing to use CFCs may be greater. As one researcher at the Montreal conference put it, "My recommendation (for a safe world) is a 95 per cent cut in CFC use immediately."

There are some encouraging signs for this ozone problem. Some countries, including Canada, have banned the use of CFCs as propellants; the hairsprays and deodorants now on our supermarket shelves are "ozone friendly." MacDonald's, a major user of convenient (throwaway) styrofoam fast food containers, is replacing them with paper ones because of the ozone problem. To solve the problem, however, more needs to be done.

Individuals, school societies, church groups, coffee socials, and action committees can take significant action. For example — and in keeping with Jacque Ellul's saying "think globally but act locally" — we should perhaps refrain from using those convenient styrofoam cups at meetings and coffee socials; we could return to ceramic cups and doing dishes. We could refrain from buying products packaged in styrofoam. Cutting down our use of foam products would be a symbolic as well as real gesture of Christian stewardship and environmental responsibility. We should make our buying and social habits "ozone friendly."

Clarence Joldersma teaches science at Smithville (Ont.) Christian High School.

Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl

The ads for movies sometimes have fine print at the bottom which warns the eventual viewer that the film may contain "course language." It might be well to issue the same warning for those who want to follow question hour and other debates in the House of Commons. The honourable company really outdid itself in the past week with language that could get a bum thrown out of a beer parlour. The speaker called in the houseleaders of the parties in an effort to clean up the act. Perhaps the honourable ladies and gentlemen could be enrolled in the course in politeness which is currently offered to Ottawa bus drivers.

★★★★

The press, when not breathlessly reporting on the marriage of Prince Charles and Princess Diana, is watching the stock market with fascination. Every rise and fall of every stock draws philosophical and involved economic comment. There will be no comment from this place, except to see at least some explanation for the current financial unrest in the following item.

★★★★

The net Canadian debt, when added up by Finance Minister Mike Wilson's pocket calculator, amounts to (hold on to your chair) the tidy sume of $264.1 billion, which is a whole lot of lollipops. Just paying interest on that will cost us $26.7 billion, or $1,066 per year for every man, woman and child in the country. Our total debt when divided by every living Canadian person would be $10,564. We live on credit. We are reversing charges to our grandchildren.

★★★★

Archbishop Donat Chiasson of Moncton did not think too highly of the recently held Vatican synod. Canadian proposals to advance the cause of lay people — especially women — were dropped because of a pre-arranged synod agenda. Bishops hoping for meaningful dialogue found themselves lectured by the Vatican bureaucracy.

★★★★

An honest politician, Renee Levesque, who for a whole decade kept Canadians spellbound with his idea of sovereignty association, died in Montreal. His Retired Majesty, resting on a cane because of recent knee-surgery, paid tribute to a formidable opponent. The two of them dominated the national political scene during the seventies. To demonstrate and underline lack of confidence in our current government, I report here that at some gatherings of political discussions I have heard (albeit spoken softly) the wish for His Majesty's return. People who expressed this wish blushed as if they were confessing some perversion.

★★★★

We have another political party: The Reform Party. The Reform Party has the laudable ideal to strive for Western development. It began this effort with viscious infighting which caused one of its aspiring founding fathers to resign even before the party was born. That's all we need: another political wrestling match.

★★★★

The day of tax reform is drawing near. A telling comment on it is the title of a recently published book: *Behind Closed Doors: How the Rich Won Control of Canada's Tax System*. The House of Common's powerful finance committee will release its report on the tax reform in the near future.

★★★★

Monsieur Mulroney has been ill with a bad flu for a couple of weeks and his doctors (important people do not have a doctor, but they have *doctors*) have told him to stay in bed. We wish him a speedy recovery.

★★★★

The pasteurized political old horses of China are slowly being led into pasture. How's that for mixing metaphors? China's leaders have smelled prosperity and have come to the conclusion that revolutionary claptrap does not feed the masses. As a sort of reflex to this Chinese semi-conversion to capitalism, MacDonalds of the golden arches will soon market Chinese fast food in the U.S. and Canada. Now there's progress!

★★★★

Smiling Mike Gorbachev is coming after all. He only *played* hard-to-get. He will be in the U.S. during the beginning of December for a three-day meeting with Reagan, who in preparation for this important summit is already taking no-doze pills.

★★★★

Gorbachev also spoke for what in Russia counts as a sort of parliament. This parliament has the same function as the bishops have in the Vatican — to listen to lectures. In one of his lectures, Gorbachev taught a bit of history, putting Stalin in his historical place which is somewhere in the neighbourhood of Hitler and other assorted mass murderers.

★★★★

President Reagan really knows how to pick 'em. His new nominee for the Supreme Court is already having difficulties because of alleged conflicts of interest.

★★★★

Both Iran and Iraq are shopping to start another round in their idiotic war. They keep the cash registers of the weapons industry ringing. How many more shopping days till they'll go at each other again?

★★★★

Grundigheit characterizes the German nation. Thoroughness! When they demonstrate, they do it with passion. Nothing as childish as just waving placards and shouting slogans. They want blood, and they got it in an anti-airport demonstration in Frankfurt where two policemen were killed and ambulances put in overtime to get the injured to hospitals.

★★★★

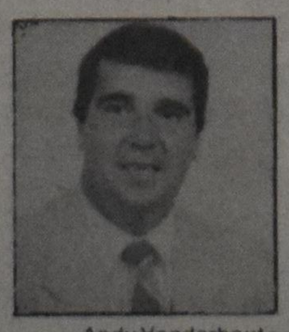
We have heard again from Moammar Gadhafi. He announced that he wants an Arab atomic bomb. Now there's an idea to sweeten the Christmas spirit. "Find a need and fill it," Robert Schuller always says. Maybe that's where Gadhafi got the idea.

★★★★

I am beginning to compose my wishes for Christmas. Loved ones approach me with the deepest question of the year: "What would you like for Christmas?" Well, I lost my little pocket knife. But for all of us in the church and the world what about a good dose of plain, level-headed, old-fashioned, matter-of-fact, unadulterated, practical, non-toxic, full-strength, soberness? I don't mean the boring kind which forbids laughter and gladness, but the apostolic kind: not being tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine. This world and the church in it has become a very windy place, and we are up to our armpits in snake oil.

Peter VanDyk

Tony Vanderhout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Editorial

Unmask the Halloween spirit of the '80s

Halloween celebrations seem to be moving from the playground of children to the playground of adults. A proprietor of a Toronto costume store reported that sales of Halloween costumes to adults are rising every year. A lady in the Niagara peninsula has been sewing costumes for herself and her family for years. She now has a collection of 40 to rent, and with demand for her costumes increasing, there will be more to come. At banks, in stores, schools and offices one can see more and more personnel dressed up on Oct. 31.

To the list of feast day wishes — Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, Happy Easter, Happy Birthday and Happy Holidays — add the greeting, "Happy Halloween." The greeting card section in your local stationery or drug store carried a full line of Halloween cards during the month of October. Several people were actually wishing each other a Happy Halloween! I don't recall having heard that before.

Sign of the times

There have been adult Halloween parties for years, of course. But there seems to be a greater emphasis on the day now compared to a few years ago. Is that a sign of the times? I believe it is.

My first reaction to a report that there have been increased sales of Halloween masks and costumes was — Why do people want to wear a mask on Halloween when they wear one all year round? Have you ever tried to guess what lives behind the faces of your colleagues, your neighbours, your husband or wife? If you want to have fun, try to guess people's identity as you meet them from day to day. It'll keep you occupied till all the graveyards give up their skeletons!

The next thought that came to me was, this is another advance of the forces of commercialization. Merchants have, since the Second World War, successfully commercialized Christian feast days. What used to be a few weeks of Christmas displays, advertising and shopping has now become several months of the same. Isn't it ironic that they are finally beginning to capitalize (as in capitalism) on a *pagan* feast day? It's ironic because commercialization is *paganization,* and if anything should have been paganized in the past, it should have been Halloween — a strange remnant of ancient Druid, Celtic and Roman superstitions.

No-calories fun

But I believe that there is a deeper reason for people wishing you "Happy Halloween" and for crawling into outlandish costumes. Could it be that they are sorely in need of more diversion, more entertainment, more escapism? Is there an undercurrent of despair running through this playful dabbling with ghosts, witches and goblins?

Not to worry, of course; no one takes evil spirits seriously, no more than anyone takes religion seriously. The superficial treatment of black magic is the final triumph of the secularization of human life. Again, ironically, Christians who slough off the meaning of Halloween by happily attending Halloween dances and Halloween parties are contributing to society's persistent slide into meaninglessness.

The defence is as familiar as it is boring — "It doesn't mean anything, it's just fun." Exactly, that's the problem — it doesn't mean anything. And it's because of this "meaninglessness" that people want more entertainment, more parties, more dress-up occasions.

Did you know that, according to a recent survey, the favourite activity of 49 per cent of the population in Canada is, no, not sex, not television, not holidays, but *shopping?* That's right, shopping. Shopping is the number one form of entertainment today. Doesn't that tell you something about what our society has become?

Have fun

Of course, we need entertainment as human beings. This is not meant to be a wet-blanket, anti-dress-up-party editorial. But if and when we dress up and wear a mask, let's do it in a positive, creative way, not hiding from each other, but revealing ourselves through our costumes, and opening up hearts through our fun.

Nor does this editorial mean to suggest that non-Christians always have meaningless parties and that only Christians know how to have clean fun. The disease of non-creativity and meaningless is not quite that discriminate in that it settles always on dead-end humanists and never on born-again deadbeats. This editorial is not first of all about people but about spirits and principalities masquerading as commercial trends and societal forces. We should not be blind to them.

Perhaps the only way to fight back is to have real fun. This can be achieved by making sure that your parties do not participate in the contemporary slide into meaninglessness and commercialization. How you do that becomes your creative challenge with family, friends and fellow employees. I can't get myself to wish you a happy Halloween the next time October 31 comes around, but have a happy time all year tricking the spirits of this age and treating yourself and your neighbour to great moments of true fellowship and liberating fun. **BW**

Canadian talent not too bad, eh?

My willingness to stretch myself as an editor, especially towards understanding youth, was expressed in watching the Juno Awards on television early November. No one else was home. I watched the thing all by myself.

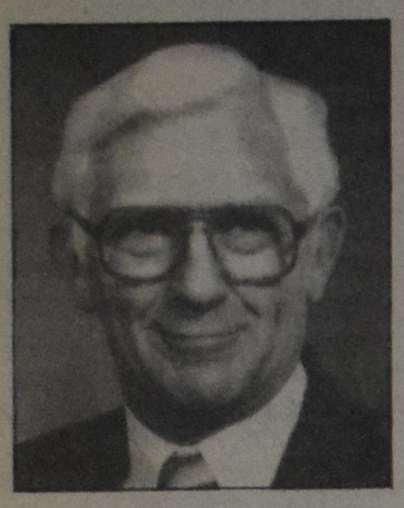
I didn't know many of the Canadian pop stars and groups, but I had heard some of their songs through exposure via our children. I must say that I enjoyed master of ceremonies Howie Mandell. That man is funny, and he is funny in a wholesome sort of way.

I told our kids, who had missed the whole thing, about it the next day — how Howie had come on stage and deliberately fallen flat on his face, artificial blood streaming down his face; how he had asked the people in the gallery to spit on the people below at the count of three; how he had stripped down to a bathing suit and had imitated synchronized swimming in a kid's plastic pool on stage. A lot of it was slapstick, but it was nicely done. And I must say, Mandell certainly has a pleasant face and manner.

Not many other people said very much that was either funny or significant, but I was pleasantly surprised at the freshness of Canadian talent. I have a few suggestions for the awards, though. I think awards should not go to the same people twice in a row. (Anne Murray's six-year winning streak was finally broken this year by Katie Lang in the female country vocalist category.) Keep the flow of creative energy going by encouraging new talent. And as far as the evening program itself is concerned, forbid award winners to thank all those "who made it possible." Nothing is more boring than to listen to a long list of "thank yous."

The press said the next day that Canadian entertainment had come of age. It had been a respectable show. Hear, hear! **BW**

SKYLIGHTS/WILLIAM R. RANG



"... But if the Bible lesson is not a vehicle to the teaching of the will of God for our personal lives, what is it?"

About the Bible lesson

I am sure that teachers use the summer months to recharge their batteries. Rest and relaxation are necessary, but the analysis of the year gone by and the preparations for the year to come take the larger part of the two months in which teachers "do nothing."

Although I have taught for more than three decades and am by now supposed to know what I am doing, there is one discipline that keeps my mind occupied. It is the Bible program.

Some years ago people who were called on giving us leadership in this area, kept on reminding us that we should not moralize the Bible story. Poor Joseph in the clutches of Potiphar's wife was not blessed because he wished to remain pure but rather because he was God's servant destined to provide for his family and relatives in view of the promise of God in Christ. Certainly. But if the Bible lesson is not a vehicle to the teaching of the will of God for our personal lives, what is it?

S.G. DeGraaf (*Promise and Deliverance)* stressed that it is the purpose of the Bible lesson to "move to the faith." Jan Waterink said just about the same. This poses an interesting question. When I stand in front of my class, what am I looking at? Christian children? "Covenant children"? Youngsters with an "authority faith"? Are they born again? What do they need? Does the fact that they have rather pious looks in their eyes during Bible class and don't quite know what to do in terms of a response to God on the playground and in the school bus tell me that their need is not easy to describe?

When the well-known author of children's books, W.G. van der Hulst, retired, his publisher asked him to write his memoirs. Not only every teacher, but every parent should read them. There is more pedagogical wisdom in his memoirs than one can find in the majority of college textbooks.

Rest assured that van der Hulst knew how to teach a Bible lesson. His well-known Bible story gives all the evidence we need. No wonder that he described his struggles thus: "It became increasingly clear that the purpose of the Bible lesson is not first of all to instil knowledge, nór to give an interpretation. Neither is it to sing the praises of spiritual truth. First and above all its purpose is to have the child kneel down in the temple of God's holiness."

While I sat in an easy-chair at the beach last summer, I pondered. Could it be true that many of the problems in churches and families are the direct outflow of the fact that we no longer experience an awareness of God's holiness?

William Rang is principal of the Christian school in Dunnville, Ontario.

Longer Letter

Rewritten story not hers

Imagine my surprise upon receiving the Oct. 30 issue of *Calvinist Contact* to discover my name attached as being the author of the front-page article entitled "Project North to be restructured." I protest! While your article was indeed based upon a *press release* I had submitted for publication, the form in which it appeared was a major rewrite and significantly revised version.

I realize it is your prerogative as editor to "cut and paste" submitted material which you feel needs some improvement in style and/or grammatical form (and I am well aware of my limited journalistic expertise). However, in this case I feel you went far beyond editorial improvements. The version which appeared carried a new title, several inserts of additional material taken from *other* sources, and significant rearranging of contents. The resulting "story" provided a number of inaccuracies some of which I would now like to clarify.

1) The title: You say, "Project North to be restructured." *My* title was: *"Project North calls for new beginnings."* I realize "restructured" can mean different things to different people. However, (as I intended to convey in *my* title) "Project North" will *not* be "restructured." What *will* happen is a *new* beginning; a *new* ecumenical church coalition (including a new name) concerned with injustice regarding Canada's aboriginal peoples. The denominations who are sponsoring members of "Project North" will together create a new "structure" for working with native people.

2) Inserted material: You say Project North "... has helped Canada's native people get a fair hearing with governments on such matters as land claims and government regulations." While that statement is in some ways true, *I* did not say any of that in my submitted material. In fact — had I been consulted — would not have agreed to the wording since I feel it does not accurately reflect the dimensions of the relationship. Similarly, in a paraphrase of a statement by National A.F.N. Chief Georges Erasmus your rewriter inserts a "misquote." Chief Erasmus did not stress (and *I* did not write) "the need for continued close relations between *Indians* and the churches." He used the terms "between native and non-native peoples," (Indian, Metis, Innu and Inuit) an important difference.

At another point you inserted the word "northern Canada" when referring to "urgent situations of injustice." I did not (and would not) say that in my submitted material. Project North has for some time now been concerned with injustice as it relates to native peoples in *all* parts of Canada (i.e. constitutional process, land claims, etc.). The new mandate (and name) from the sponsoring churches will more accurately reflect that fact.

In addition, a fairly major "typographical error" appears in the first line of the second column. The word "teasing" was substituted for my word "tension."

One final clarification. Given the major, rewritten form in which my submitted material finally appeared in your newspaper, I request that the *real* author be given credit.

Joanne Lips,
Scarborough, Ontario

Response

We made a mistake in placing your name above a rewritten story. Indeed, we should have placed Robert Vander-Vennen's name there. Our sincere apologies. That admission having been made, as well as the admission of having missed a few important nuances and a typo, let me say that we stand behind the title of the story. Our sources indicated a restructuring, and that's what we called it. The fact that you were reappointed to Project North by the Council of Christian Reformed Church in Canada only last week indicates that Project North will continue in some form, even if it will involve a new beginning and a new name.

Editor

Letters

Editorial Policy: We encourage our readers to write brief responses to material published in our paper. Please specify the issue and article your are commenting on. A long letter, 500 to 750 words, may be published in the upper right hand corner of this page provided it meets editorial standards. Letters may be abbreviated or excerpts may be published to meet editorial requirements. Unsigned letters will not be published but names may be withheld upon request.

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For many years we have shared *Calvinist Contact* with my parents and we're tired of digging up back issues which are related to a follow-up column or a letter. Please send us your magazine to the above address.

We enjoy reading everything. Though my Dutch has deteriorated, I especially enjoy Herman de Jong. Thank you also for your thought-provoking editorials.

Ever since Bert Witvoet became editor we have said, "We should write a letter saying how much we enjoy this article or that issue." We never did this; so let this letter be a hearty "thank you" for your years of service.

God bless you in your endeavours. If your open house had been in British Columbia, we would have been there.

Margaret Vegt,
Surrey, British Columbia

Political document not implemented

I was pleased to see your review of Bill Honig's *Last Chance for our Children* (C.C., Oct. 23, 1987). I think one observation and one critical point are in order.

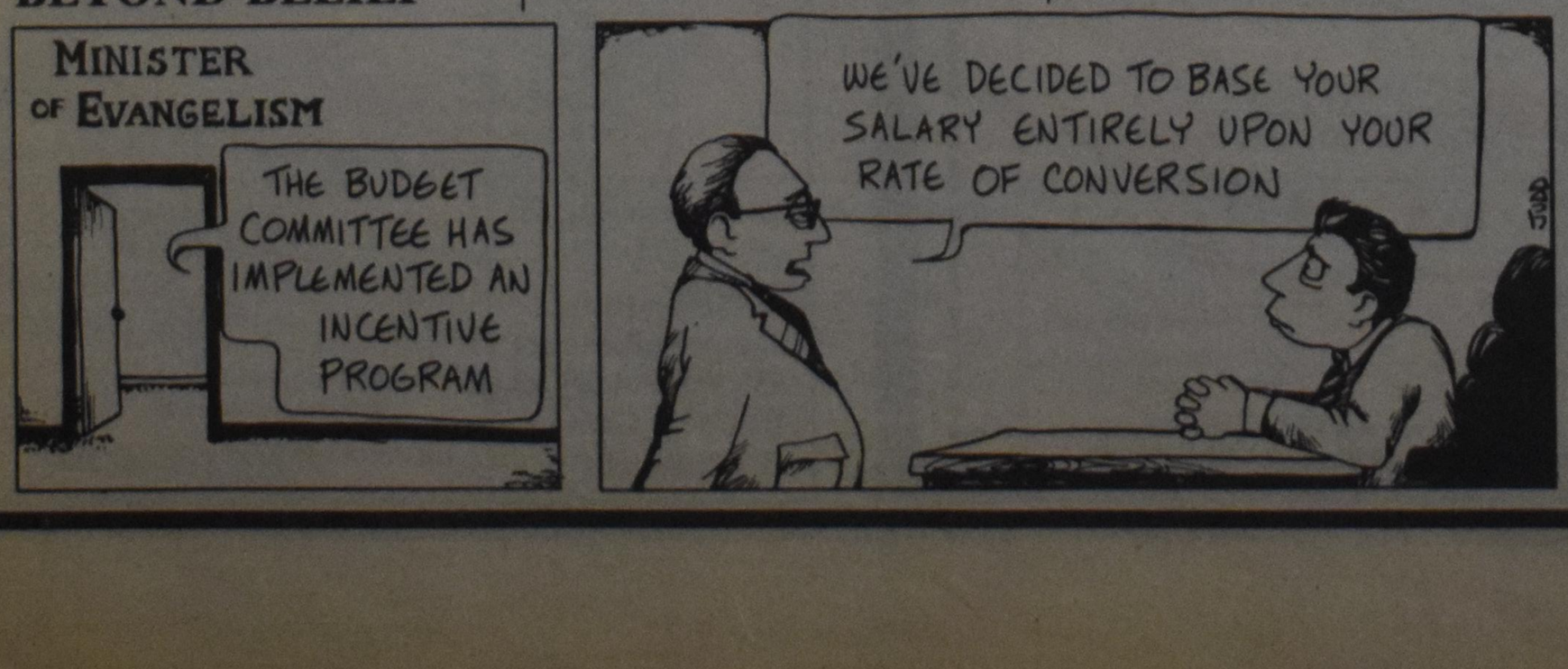
1. The review might have mentioned that Bill Honig's book is a highly *political* document, intended to help him win support for his educational plans and budgets, and possibly for the governorship of the state of California. What he says specifically seems (to me) less important than some account of the current politics of education in that state, and the feud between Honig and the current California governor.

2. I must take issue with the reviewer's observation that "Honig's master plan ... has been implemented in California." Who says? Not Honig, as I know from having talked to some of his high officials! Not the thousands of California teachers I have met from San Diego to San Francisco since last January, and the hundreds with whom I have discussed California education. And not the Los Angeles teachers who keep asking me to help them implement Bill Honig's language arts framework.

Come to think of it, I have never heard of *any* education masterplan that was *ever* really implemented except on the very surface, and that includes "Living and Learning" in Ontario.

Adrian Peetoom,
Willowdale, Ontario

BEYOND BELIEF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JIM

Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

Rescue of trapped toddler is an answer to prayer

MIDLAND, Tex. (EP) — Worldwide prayer support strengthened volunteers who worked around the clock Oct. 14-16 to free 18-month-old Jessica McClure, who was trapped 22 feet underground in an abandoned well.

"I think we just about had a world revival," said Harold McClure, Jessica's grandfather. "We got calls from all over the world — Australia, Italy, lots of places — telling us people were praying."

God was glorified through the rescue of Jessica, said the Rev. Ross Payne, pastor of Cotton Flat Baptist Church where Harold McClure joined in a praise service after the rescue. "Everyone involved is on a mountain top right now," Payne told the Baptist Press. "Everyone is giving God the credit." Payne's sermon the following Sunday was on giving thanks, and the service featured praise songs.

Payne said the rescue of young Jessica brought Christians together with non-Christians to work for a common goal. "God's hand was on this throughout the whole thing. It's marvelous when you see Christians pulling together to do something, but this went beyond that. There were people who you aren't about to get in church working on this. Only the Lord can bring people together like this."

Jessica is the youngest of McClure's 15 grandchildren, and he says, "It was hard watching on television, seeing what was going on at the well and thinking of our little granddaughter down there. But we knew God was with her."

An inspiring Coffee Break

The recent third Coffee Break All-Ontario Inspirational Rally in Toronto was the setting in which the folks above could sing their hearts out. Some 500 people attended the rally which brought together many involved in the Christian Reformed Church's "Coffee Break," an evangelistic Bible study program aimed at women.

Why not extend Christmas Greetings in Calvinist Contact. See page 14 for details.

Pastoral Pondering

Where are the poor?

John Kerssies

(The Christian Reformed Church takes note of the spiritual condition of its congregations via "church visitors" who are appointed by each classis.)

A concern expressed in a recent "church visitors'" oral report was that our deacons do not have many poor people to look after, at least not within this particular local church community. I am sure that this phenomenon is present in many churches.

In fact, I would judge that within my own congregation of well over 200 families one can count on the fingers of one hand the number of persons our deacons minister to financially. I am not suggesting that our deacons are not doing their job. I think we have a fine body of deacons who are truly concerned about priestly service in the name of Jesus. The fact is that there are very few poor members within my congregation.

The fact that deacons could be almost idle within the boundaries of a local church points to the fact that the Christian Reformed Church, or at least my local congregation, enjoys relative prosperity, to put it mildly. My own assessment is that we have become a middle class, possibly upper middle class, church. I find this especially true of my Ottawa community, which according to statistical studies has the highest income anywhere in Canada.

If the question "Where are the poor?" is raised, then most of us will have to look outside our own boundaries to find them. As we should well know, though *we* may not know them, even Canada has many poor people. To illustrate, hardly a week goes by when someone does not stop at our parsonage for either money or food. It has happened quite frequently that I have referred such people to our deacons who administered the help that was needed.

Do we accept the downtrodden?

I'm sure most of us are generally and genuinely concerned about the plight of the poor. However, I do wonder how open we are to receiving the poor, so that they can become part of our church community. How inclusive or exclusive are we? Would we be willing to receive the town drunk with open arms? Would he or she receive love and genuine acceptance within our fellowship? Would we be willing to accept such a person as a member and become responsible to pay his or her "quotas?"

I am raising some tough questions and I would be less than honest if I were to answer the above questions with a solid positive answer. I would be more honest in saying that some poor people that come to my door for hand-outs turn me off. By nature I am not all that willing to reach out to them. Sometimes I rationalize my way away from the poor; then I suddenly find myself being a poor representative of Jesus.

Where are the poor? We know where they should be — namely in the church, where God's people can minister to them.

John Kerssies is pastor at Calvin Christian Reformed Church in Ottawa, Ontario.

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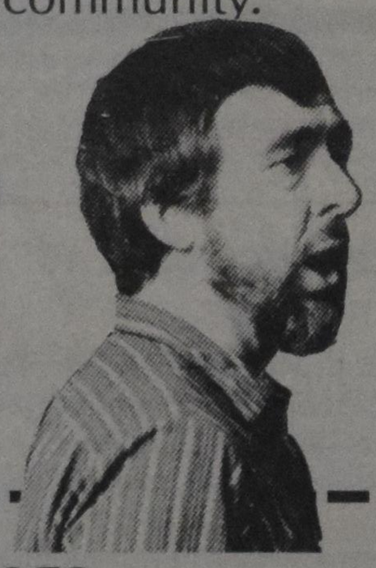

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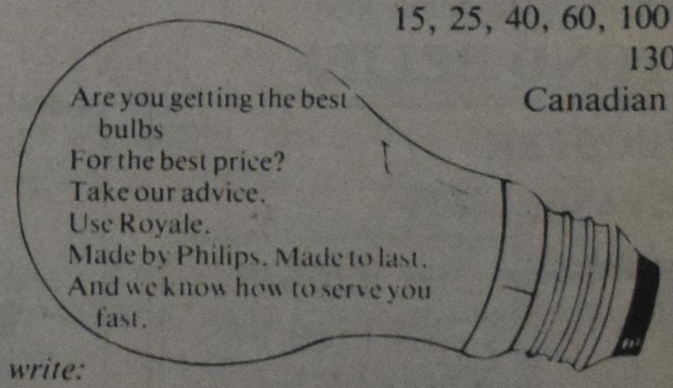
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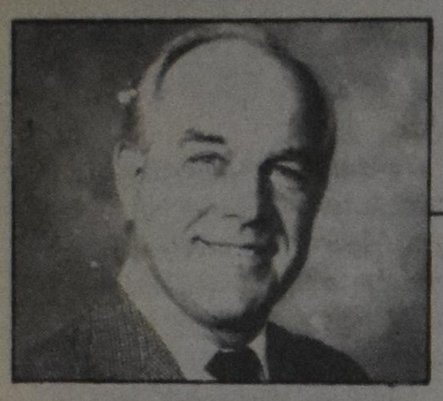

Canadian Church Scene

The Pope, Palestine and overhead projectors

Jacob Kuntz

The Pope in Fort Simpson

It could be expected that the Roman Catholic magazines in Canada would write extensively on the visit of the Pope to Fort Simpson on Sept. 20, 1987. The *Catholic New Times* (Oct. 11) was especially thankful for the support the Pope had given to the native people in their struggle for self-government, seeing this as a sign of hope not only for the aboriginal peoples, but also for the church itself.

When the rainbow appeared in the sky above Fort Simpson, on the day Pope John Paul II returned to meet the native people of the North, it seemed as if the fog (which had bedevilled his first attempt to visit) had lifted to reveal some gracious promise.

This was one brief shining rainbow moment which gave the church and the native peoples a glimmer of a future together which could be different from the past.

Sept. 20, 1987, was a day which revealed promise. The native people presented themselves not as a people with problems, but as a people of promise. In affirming their right to self-government within the political framework that is Canada, these people appeared as the bearers of the promise of a new relationship, a relationship of equality between the original inhabitants and the latecomers to this country.

In keeping his promise to return to visit Fort Simpson, the Pope presented the church as a body which values the promise of the aboriginal peoples. In this gesture, something promising was revealed about the church itself.

The next few months will reveal whether this rainbow day was merely a moment or whether it was the sign of a momentum gathering to fashion a new covenant with the aboriginal peoples. Much will depend on how church people in this country will honour the promises made at Fort Simpson. This rainbow day must now be coloured with commitment.

Hope for the Middle East?

The editor of the (United Church) *Observer* travelled through the Middle East last summer, "to try and understand what role churches can play in this violent region." In a long article in the October issue (worthwhile reading!) he tells of his experiences. Also his editorial of that month dealt with the situation in the Middle East. He poses the urgent question: Is there hope for the Middle East?

It is hard to write of the Middle East, the Holy Land. As Al Forrest discovered, it's too hot a topic for most of the media. We Western Christians carry the guilt of Christian sins against Jews which culminated in the Holocaust.

To enter the Middle East through Lebanon, though, and to proceed through Syria and Jordan to Israel and Palestine, and end up in Egypt is to see a region where the Six Day War is still not over. It is to see a region where the holiest sites of the three related religions of Islam, Judaism and Christianity are filled with tired, frightened people, exhausted from too much hate and too little love.

But, as one Lebanese said when I asked about the human tragedies, "Look over there." The Mediterranean was shimmering as only that sea can. The sun was hot and the sky blue. The lonely mountain redoubts were green, tinged with patches of snow.

To me, the Middle East has only hope left, and that is fading fast. We in the West had better overcome our guilt, our apathy, our fear of appearing to side against one or another, and use our power to make certain that moderates on *all* sides are not held captive by extremists on *all* sides. It is an international problem.

Life goes on in the camps and villages, cities and green valleys. But, more and more, it is life with little hope. Once the extremists are in control there is no more hope — not for Syria, not for Jordan, not for Egypt and no, not for Israel. My notebook asks the question: Is Lebanon now the model for the future of the Middle East?

Should the sermon go?

Throughout the ages the sermon has been one of the most important channels by which the people of God were instructed in the Word of God. "The living preaching of His Word," the *Heidelberg Catechism* calls it. Has the sermon become obsolete? Does the church have to look for new ways to communicate the gospel? The *Canadian Baptist* (October, 1987) expresses the opinion that this is indeed so. Whether we agree or not, guest editor Carl Friesen gives us food for thought.

In our Monday evening home Bible study we decided to have regular discussions of the previous Sunday's sermon. This would, we hoped, help us gain more benefit from the sermon and show us how to apply it to our lives.

Well, it sounded like a good idea. But as it turned out, several people in the study group couldn't remember much about the sermon. Fewer could remember the Bible text on which it was based. And nobody at all could give an accurate summary of the sermon's content.

Now, our pastor is a good preacher. He chooses relevant topics, well illustrated with examples, thought through and presented clearly. He uses the same homiletics principles I learned in Bible school: text, three main points, conclusion. But does it work? Why could not these people — myself included — remember anything much about a sermon they had heard only 30 hours before? I think it's because that for most people in today's society, a traditional sermon is not the best way to learn.

What am I advocating? That we look at other methods of teaching now in use, which seem to be most effective!

One pastor I know uses overhead projectors to highlight the main features of his talk. Congregation members tell him it helps them follow the points and remember better what he has said. Overheads help reinforce what is spoken by showing it visually as well. Flipcharts and blackboards also help increase the amount of information someone retains. How about a slide show, film or video? A simple dramatization of the message can also help, using situations and characters drawn from everyday life.

There could also be panel discussions or debates on issues facing Christians in everyday situations, such as business ethics, time management or how to share our wealth with others.

Might it be possible to divert some of the church's resources of time and money away from Sunday morning service to other areas, such as midweek home Bible studies and prayer meetings?

"But these ideas have no place in the way we do things now — particularly Sunday morning!" I hear you say. You may well be right. Yet is it not better to change how the church operates and what it presents, rather than expect people to fit into means of communication that are increasingly obsolete and irrelevant for them?

The church is intended to do a job. It is to help its members be better Christians. If what it is doing doesn't work, it is time for change.

Jacob Kuntz is pastor of First Christian Reformed Church, Kitchener, Ontario.

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Education

The year of the Lord's favour for handicapped children

Jake Kuiken

A recent sermon dealing with the responsibility of Christian parents to provide their children with a Christian education is the event precipitating this article. What might otherwise have been a rather mediocre sermon, by virtue of a single phrase took on an entirely different dimension. The essential message of the sermon was that Christian education is a requirement for all children of Christian parents except, of course "... such legitimate exceptions as the learning disabled." Now, having interpreted that remark more generally as referring to "the disabled," it has contributed to considerable reflection on a variety of seemingly unrelated events and experiences tied together by a common theme of "legitimate exceptions."

I should point out that a subsequent conversation with that pastor revealed that the intent of his casually inserted remark was to dissuade parents of children with handicaps from experiencing unnecessary guilt at *not* having their children enrolled in Christian schools. Even though innocently enough intended, standing on its own, the comment is at best incomplete, probably wrong, and perhaps, at worst, even cavalier. At the same time it is typical of the barriers parents of children with handicaps encounter regularly in dealing with professionals and institutions whom one would expect to be supportive and helpful.

This public remark by a Christian Reformed cleric about "legitimate exceptions" from Christian education came at a particularly bad time because of the larger context in which all gospel proclamation must necessarily take place. When the church, charged with the unique task of proclaiming the gospel, by intent or by default lines-up with public policies which are fundamentally unjust, it does not serve that gospel well. Additionally, it points to the alienation that can result from carelessness in sermon preparation.

Educational apartheid

Another recent experience further solidified the impact of hearing those words from the pulpit. In the context of a review of its bylaws, it was suggested that a Christian school society should clearly commit itself to the education of "all" children of Christian parents. This proposal was met with both vocal opposition and a not-so-subtle suggestion favouring a form of "educational apartheid." From otherwise staunch supporters of Christian education these responses were rather surprising and it is, therefore, ironic that the teachers/administrators of the school in question have been singularly supportive and co-operative in fully including a number of children with handicaps in their regular program of daily instruction.

The scope of "legitimate exceptions" is not limited to the Christian community. My wife and I are parents of a child with a handicap; in the last year or so, especially, this has been both a rewarding and trouble-some experience. In the latter category there is convincing evidence that while significant progress is being made for persons with handicaps, society's negative attitudinal barriers remain solidly entrenched.

Most rewarding, on the other hand, has been the opportunity to become involved in the "Coalition for Parents of Children with Handicaps." This coalition of parents grew rapidly in response to the Alberta Conservative government's 1986 decision to cut funding by 57 per cent in Calgary for in-home support services for families of children with handicaps.

Representing 20 different kinds of disabilities, the Coalition participants have an uncommonly strong commitment to helping their children and other persons with disabilities lead a full life. To them, "legitimate exceptions" does not constitute a defensible or acceptable position under any circumstances.

Alberta's PC government not only drastically cut its financial support for families of children with handicaps in 1986, but also introduced a new School Act which permits boards of education to declare some children as "non-educable." This policy is reinforced by having structured the proposed act in such a manner that it ensures the continuation of segregating the handicapped into a system that looks more and more like "educational apartheid."

Chronic sadness?

For me, as one of the organizers of the coalition and often its spokesperson, the experiences associated with these developments had provided my wife and me unique opportunities to enter the lives of families who have the responsibility of raising a child with a handicap. What are such families like? A specialist in deaf studies from Boston (shortly after the diagnosis of our daughter as severe to profoundly deaf) told a self-help parent support group that after 30 years of having worked with families of children with handicaps, two unique characteristics distinguished them from all others. First, the pronounced presence of a "chronic sadness," and second, that "the highs are higher and the lows are lower." The experience of our own family and that of numerous other families with whom the coalition has been involved over the past year validates those remarks over and over.

Possibly another characteristic has been the degree to which these families have not experienced the support of a caring, nurturing community. In fact, many have had to struggle alone with the encumbrance of uncaring and even punitive attitudes of friends, families, professionals and institutions. Without the presence of an extended family, or a network of good friends or a self-help parent support group, many continue for years to experience incredible levels of hopelessness, stress, loneliness, guilt and anger. For many these feelings have led to broken and even in some instances abusive relationships between spouses, parents, children, families and friends.

This level of desperation is perhaps best characterized by a few brief vignettes of recent experiences with participants in the coalition. A parent from an African nation, visiting Canada to find some way into the country in order to get some help for his multi-handicapped and aggressive son, was prepared to consider both legal and illegal options at considerable risk to his own life and to other family members. Another parent, worn out from fighting with public school board officials for the integration of her daughter with Down's Syndrome, moved to another jurisdiction in Canada loosing a well-established cleaning business in the process.

A mother with two young deaf children was told that there's no point in giving language stimulation to the youngest because he was not ready for it; therefore, the assistance of a specialized aide was refused.

After a three-year battle, a major school board reluctantly agreed to provide some minimal stimulation for a medically fragile and severely handicapped child; until now the parents had been maintaining rotating shifts in caring for their son.

A single parent on welfare with a severely mentally handicapped child and an especially gifted child is refused periodic respite services, but the government offered to place the child with a handicap in a foster home as the alternative solution to extra-ordinary levels of stress encountered in this family.

Photo: *Panorama*

Churches and Christian schools should not be speaking of "legitimate exceptions."

A very poor single parent and mother of a multi-handicapped child stood up in a meeting of 300 people, visibly upset and crying because she was never told that the services taken away from the others present in the room were even available in the first place.

The litany could go on indefinitely; however, I hope the point is clear: families of children with handicaps encounter tremendous barriers. The barriers are largely based on ignorance and attitudes which can lead to rationalizing concepts such as "legitimate exceptions."

Church produced bitterness

One of the most disconcerting experiences has been the often repeated account of the real and perceived lack of support from the institutional church. The phrase, "Oh, I gave up on the (institutional) church long ago" has been a common expression heard from many of these parents; for some of them giving up on the church produced a great deal of bitterness. While there are

Continued on page 13 ...

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ICS

Remembrance Day

Silent reflections

Photo: *What is love?*

"How can God be love?" I tried to change the question; "How can people be so cruel and crazy?"

Carl D. Tuyl

The weather set the tone for our program of that day: a dull overcast sky in which low clouds chased each other from the west to the east. Bright sunshine would somehow have been incongruous and out of keeping with the nature of our pilgrimage. From our hotel in Valkenburg we set out to visit Margraten, the American War Cemetery.

Margraten is the only American military cemetery on Dutch ground. It was one of the first to be used for the interment of American servicemen who fell on German soil. The cemetery occupies 65.5 acres of what was previously farm land. The property on which the cemetery is located is owned by the Dutch government, but the land has been granted free of charge to the government of the United States in perpetuity.

The road which took us to the cemetery is literally an old war path. Roman soldiers already used it in their conquest of the red-bearded Germanic tribes. Napoleon's armies traveled on it both in triumph and in defeat. Hitler's hordes roared their pantzers on it, on their way to Belgium and France, and retreated on its pavement again in 1944, pursued by the U.S. 30th Infantry Division which was part of the Ninth U.S. Army.

We entered the cemetery via the Court of Honour. To our right was a marble wall on which the names of those buried there were inscribed. Above the Court of Honour rose a tower on which sides were the names of the battles fought by the soldiers and airmen who are commemorated in the cemetery.

Tears and comfort

Behind the tower, on an elevation which already allowed us to have a panoramic view of the long rows of white crosses, was a chapel. Prayers were chiseled with golden letters in its walls. On the altar was a silver flower bowl, a gift from the Dutch, as was the wrought iron candelabra next to the altar. We were the only visitors as we stood silently looking at the seemingly endless rows of graves, repeating the prayers in dual unison.

There are 8,301 American soldiers buried in that place. They came from every state in the Union, from England, Canada and Mexico. One hundred and six crosses are marked with the words "Known to God." God also knows the tears shed for the people who found their last resting place here. I remembered a verse from one of the Psalms I once preached on: "list my tears on your scroll." "There is no scroll long enough," I thought, "to list these tears. Eight thousand, three hundred and one! Fathers, mothers, wives, lovers, children, brothers, sisters must have multiplied their tears byond the possibility of recording. Then again I knew that God saw every one of those tears fall to the ground. There was a sort of quieting comfort in that knowledge.

Who were they?

We proceeded to walk onto the actual burial ground. The graves were marked with Latin Crosses, except for 178 Stars of David for Jewish soldiers. Every gravestone is made from fine Italian marble. In no less than 40 instances, two brothers lie buried side by side.

The graves were immaculately white, as if their whiteness was meant to eradicate the memory of blood and grime. The crosses, almost as far as we could see, were lined up with mathematical precision, as if on parade. I had the irreverent thought that an old veteran sergeant had commanded them to "Eeeyyys riiiight!"

I looked at the names on the headstones. Rank, name and date of death were engraven in the marble. There were a lot of privates, and a lot of second lieutenants, the two most dangerous ranks in infantry. Here and there I saw Dutch names, and strangely I wondered if they were from my Christian Reformed Church heritage. At one grave there was a bouquet of red roses and white lilies. It must have been left there that very day, the flowers were still fresh.

Some soldiers had fallen on dates close, very close, to the end of the fighting. I imagined a young fellow having landed at the beaches of Normandy, having fought his way after many days into Germany. Across a hundred meadows, ditches, canals and mudfields. Escaping a thousand deaths from enemy fire. Taking cover in countless foxholes for equally countless exploding grenades. Writing letters home: "it's almost finished, we're coming home." Then deep into Germany, when negotiations for complete surrender were already going on, a bullet found his heart. Dead! One more casualty!

Emotional questions

It is difficult to record the emotions I experienced as I walked with my wife between the graves. They were legion. A blend of a thousand memories flooded my mind. Mud, blood, noise, shouted commands, the rumble of artillery, the frightened faces of civilians, laughter, the whiteness of hospital sheets and the stench of sweat-drenched uniforms. They and many more mixed into an amalgam of deep and intense sadness.

We left silently. There was a sign at the entrance of the cemetery which asked for reverent silence. It must be either the most unnecessary sign in the world or there must be people who are so far beyond civility that they almost do not belong to the human race anymore.

In our car we traveled again the route of the Roman legions, Napoleon's army, Hitler's blond blond beasts and the boys from overseas. We did not speak much.

Later on, I tried to relate the experience to someone who is very close to me. Her comment was: "How can God be love?" I tried to change the question: "How can people be so cruel and crazy?" She is still stuck in the first question. I am not finished with the second one.

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Feature

The Horn of Africa is not a horn of plenty

Robert VanderVennen

The Horn of Africa — the region around that far eastern rump of Africa that sticks out into the Indian Ocean just below the boot of Arabia — is an intensely troubled part of the world where the struggle for life is often lost.

We are well acquainted with famine in Ethiopia, we hear of refugees, and we hear vague rumours of civil wars and unspeakable atrocities. That is the picture made clear in a recent issue of the "Peace Section Newsletter" of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and punctuated by daily reports on the back pages of our newspapers and weekly magazines.

The chief countries in the area are Somalia in the east, Ethiopia next to it, and Sudan to the northwest, just under Egypt. Just north of Somalia is a speck of a country called Djibouty. These are former colonies of European countries and now seem to be countries of chaos.

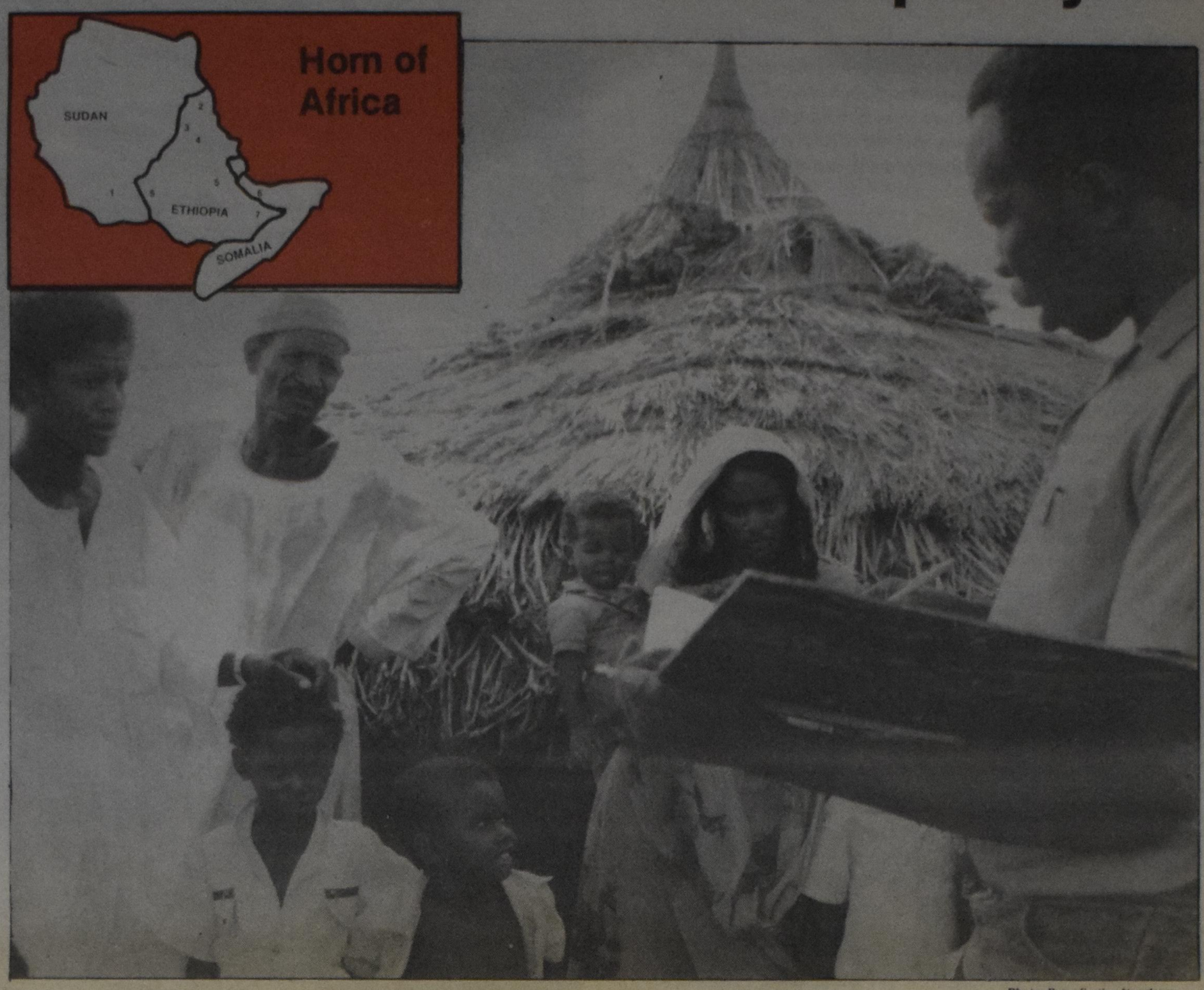

Photo: *Peace Section Newsletter*

A family from the Hasania tribe, originally from northern Sudan. Inset: Locations of major wars in the Horn of Africa.

War galore

Wars abound in the region. The "*Peace Section Newsletter*" (Sept.-Oct., 1987) identifies seven of the major wars by number on the adjoining map. In southern Sudan (1) the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA), largely Christians of the Dinka tribe, have been in revolt against the Muslim government since 1983. *The Christian Science Monitor* reports that although "hunger is a major enemy facing both civilians, troops, and rebels in the south," 16 relief agencies were told by the government on Sept. 23 that they must leave Sudan because they were co-operating with the rebels, probably meaning that they were distributing food in rebel-held areas. Both the government and the rebels have been charged with using food as a weapon, while thousands starve daily. A hopeful sign is that very recently the SPLA leader, Col. John Garang, has expressed a willingness to participate in peace talks. One of Garang's conditions for peace talks is that the government abolish Islamic law (*sharia)* which currently applies to all Sudanese.

No fewer than five wars are taking place simultaneously in Ethiopia. In the north (2) the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, which claims to control 75 per cent of the former Italian colony of Eritrea, wants independence. Also in the north the Tigray People's Liberation Front (3) has been fighting the government since 1976, controlling about 85 per cent of the Tigray region. The Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (4) wants to overthrow the government and bring in a federated democracy. The Oeomo Liberation Front (5) began fighting for a separate state in much of central and southern Ethiopia. The Western Somali Liberation Front (7) wants its area to be part of Somalia rather than Ethiopia.

Somalia, too, has its war zone. In the north the Somali National Movement (6) attacked the Somali army in 1987 with the help of the Ethiopian army (as if it didn't have enough to do) with the aim of overthrowing the government, which is run by tribes in the south rather than the north.

Famine unchecked

This political and military chaos is not the soil for confronting the problems of famine, which would be very real even without the fighting. The situation in Ethiopia — a polyglot land with 75 different languages — is a case study. The area is subject to erratic rainfall and there have been several years of poor rainfall recently. At the same time poor land management in mountainous areas has resulted in severe erosion. On top of this, new high taxes on stockpiles of grain, which are needed to tide the people over in years of poor rainfall, have made it hard to maintain the necessary stockpiles. The fighting has destroyed crops; delayed planting has meant poor crops or no crops; oxen eaten by starving people could not be used to work the fields; and so on.

Superpower influence

The U.S.S.R. and the U.S. have been very active in the Horn of Africa since World War II, reports Ruth Rempel of MCC. Both have poured money into the area in recent years. Has the motive been to help the people in their intense struggle to live? Not quite. Both superpowers have their own interests at heart. Those interests are power and control. The Horn of Africa is strategic, geographically. It is close to the oil-producing areas of the Middle East, it holds a commanding position on the Red Sea and, therefore, the Suez Canal, and it lies on the Indian Ocean where the superpowers are competing for dominance.

At first the U.S. was a big friend of Ethiopia. The Soviets cozied up to Somalia and Sudan in 1969 when coups brought pro-Soviet governments to both countries. But when a communist-oriented revolution overthrew the Ethiopian emperor in 1974, Ethiopia turned away from the U.S. to the U.S.S.R. Then the U.S. and Saudi Arabia were successful in wooing Sudan and Somalia. So the region did a political about-face.

It has been said that in the Horn neither war nor peace is allowed unless it is to the advantage of the superpowers. Governments are kept dependent on the superpowers who give or sell them enough arms so they do not lose their wars, but not enough to win them, allowing independence of their paternal superpowers. Continued warfare gives the superpowers lucrative arms markets. The Sudanese civil war costs an estimated $1-million per day (U.S.) and the Ethiopian wars $2-million a day. Political non-alignment, the goal of all African nations, is not possible here.

Tragedy continues

The Horn of Africa is one of the deeply tragic areas of the world today. Regional power struggles, tribal jealousies, Christian-Muslim intolerance, Marxist-capitalist strife, and superpower exploitation all combine to cause heartbreaking starvation, mass displacement of people — refugees without hope. Can we still see the benefit brought by Beldof's LIVE AID and by church-based relief in 1985? It is hard to know. The area has had indigenous Christian churches since the first century A.D., and Western Christian missions have been active for over 100 years. But that has not brought peace but devastation and bitter anguish to the people.

Call for the Lord of the nations to deliver his people in the Horn of Africa just as He delivered the children of Israel from Goshen in ancient times. And pray for the people as you follow the news, backing your prayers with whatever action as you can take.

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Profile

After the conversion:
a Christian group home and Christian school (1)

Ron Rupke

I first met Don and Debbie Waterhouse at a CLAC-organized conference last June. When I heard about their decision to start a Christian school for residents of their group home, I was fascinated. I soon decided that this was a story worth sharing with my own community, where Christian education has long been cherished. When I visited the Waterhouses at the Highland Crossroads, my interest in the story deepened. Of particular interest to me were the circumstances under which Don Waterhouse began his life in Christ — the story which I have recounted here — and which I think of as spontaneous combustion by the Holy Spirit.

There is something wonderfully fresh and radical about the Christian life which has followed that turning point. I have not mentioned much about church affiliation in this story because, although the Waterhouses attend a gospel church which describes itself as non-denominational, in fact they cannot easily be identified with any particular religious tradition. Especially for that reason, I find significance in their decisions to operate a distinctively Christian group home and a distinctively Christian school.

Photo: Courtesy of Ron Rupke

Debbie and Don Waterhouse with two residents of the Highland Crossroads: 12-year-old Billy Brand (l.) and 25-year-old Michael Pelletier (r.).

Don Waterhouse began life in northern England during the closing years of the Second World War. Although his father had been raised in a nominally Catholic home and his mother had Methodist roots, Christianity was not an issue in his boyhood home, and Don can recall no yearning for God. He moved quickly from schooling to police training, and became a police constable at the age of 19. He enjoyed police work and can recall no other ambition than to do well and advance through the ranks until retirement.

These plans suddenly changed when he took a summer vacation in Canada, found something fresh and new in this country, and resolved to look into emigration. He actually immigrated to Canada a year later, and briefly looked into the possibility of doing police work here before deciding to try other options. He worked at a variety of short-term occupations, including truck driving, finally taking a job with a finance company. Before long he found himself managing a company branch in Cochrane, Ontario. In 1972 the finance company went out of business, and Don Waterhouse found himself suddenly out of work and stranded in an isolated northern community.

A conversion story

This change in circumstances introduced him to emotions he had not felt before — confusion, loneliness and self-doubt. For the first time in his life he began to pick up books dealing with spiritual questions, and he recalls in particular reading *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis. His malaise continued, and Don began to identify his inner turmoil as a sense of guilt and a feeling that somehow his life had gone all wrong. He took a bartending job in the Northland Hotel, but the easy comradery he had always enjoyed with others was no longer his.

He went to a doctor complaining of anxiety, and when the doctor prescribed sleeping pills, he felt all the more sure that he was losing equilibrium. Suddenly, God was the burning issue in his life, and the load of confusion, fear, loneliness and guilt became in Don's tortured mind, hell. In fact, his fleeting thoughts of shooting himself offered no comfort in his panic, since he was somehow certain that he would continue beyond his physical death.

The crisis came as he entered the Northland Hotel bar early one afternoon. At one of the tables sat a couple he felt should not be there; the man and woman were married to others.

Suddenly Don could not go on with his work. He told the hotel manager that he was ill, and excused himself. His sense of having fallen and of being unable to pick himself up again was overwhelming. He found a quiet spot in a nearby park, fell to his knees, and asked God to end his torment. He looked up and had the momentary impression that he was seeing a vision of a lighted cross in a tree. A closer look showed it to be part of a nearby church building, which Don hurried toward. The door was locked, but a priest answered Don's knock and invited him in when he saw the desperation on his face.

During the next half hour, Don confessed many things which had occurred in his past years, and the priest responded by assuring him that God loved him, and that Jesus Christ had died for his sins. Don left the church feeling much better, and as he headed back to the hotel for a beer with his friends, he remembers congratulating himself for beating whatever had been tormenting him.

His relief was short-lived. When he woke up the next morning, the feelings of fear and guilt were back, and Don felt an overwhelming fear of that nameless fear itself.

Falling on his knees, he prayed to God and for the first time wanted Jesus Christ to enter his heart. When he stood up again he felt that something had changed, and he expected that God would provide answers to the questions about where his life was going.

Shortly afterward, a man he knew only casually, approached him and asked if he was still interested in working with children. The man was an employee of Browndale, then an organization which ran group homes for disturbed children. Don saw this approach as an answer to his quest, and made his decision quickly. Soon he moved into the staff residence at a group home operated by Browndale in the Haliburton region. He did so with a distinct belief that he had followed God's calling — a new career at the beginning of his newly-directed life.

Don Waterhouse moved into his new job with gusto. The *angst* he had experienced in the past months gave him a point of contact with the alienated and disturbed young residents at Browndale. He felt he could relate to their fear and anger, their rootlessness and hopelessness. He had no argument about the long hours on the job, nor with the requirement that he live in a staff residence on the same property. He felt no need for a life outside, since his hours off work were filled with his Bible

Continued on page 12 ...

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After the conversion: a Christian group home and Christian school

...continued from page 11.

reading, and reading of books on various spiritual questions. For the first time in years he felt good about himself and about his work, and both the children and fellow staff members responded well to him.

About three months into the job, while attending one of the group therapy sessions that were compulsory for all Browndale staff members, Don met a young woman, Debbie Mason, who shared some of his ideas about the work they were doing. A friendship began immediately.

The path that led Debbie Mason to work at the Browndale homes in Haliburton was utterly unlike the events that brought Don Waterhouse to the same place. Debbie's parents are devout evangelical Christians, and Debbie spent her early years travelling with them to various missionary training schools and mission projects. She was about 10 years old when her family settled in the town of West Guilford. There Debbie went to school, and she started working part-time at the Browndale home while she was a student in Grade 13.

Following high school, Debbie wanted to attend university in order to move beyond what she felt to be the sheltered Christian environment in which she had been raised. Her parents wanted her to choose a Bible college, and she compromised by enrolling at Richmond College, a Christian liberal arts college once located near Scarborough, Ontario.

She did well academically, but Debbie was not satisfied that she was learning much of real importance, and left after one year to work as a legal secretary in Toronto. A year later she left the job to travel with a friend, and ended up spending most of a year in Mexico. By autumn of 1972 she knew that she really wanted to work with children, and she moved back to her parents home in West Guilford to work full-time at the Browndale home there.

Questionable methods

This difference in personal history may explain why Debbie Mason's experience as a Browndale staff member differs from that of Don. While she had no regrets about her career decision, Debbie began to have small misgivings about the setup and methods used at Browndale. New staff members were required to be on the premises for 16 hours per day for a combination of work and training, and Debbie was soon encouraged to move out of her parent's home and into a staff residence.

In the methods she was taught to use to interact with the children, Debbie recognized the applied theories of men whose ideas she had studied briefly and uncritically at Richmond College — B.F. Skinner, and Carl Rogers. She saw how these methods were effective in changing problem behaviour, and yet she sensed a conflict with her Christian faith. She began to resent the fact that she had no time to think these things through, since Browndale demanded most of her waking hours.

Debbie particularly resented the compulsory group therapy sessions, in which staff members were subjected to the same treatment techniques used on the children. While staff members were encouraged to yell, scream, cry, and express frustration and anger about the treatment received from others, especially from parents, Debbie simply felt fear and anger because she was forced to take part in these outpourings of emotions she could not share. She saw this as a conflict with God's commandment to honour father and mother. She was unable to articulate her own frustration about having no time to reflect on the conflict between her own Christian beliefs, and the Browndale methods. Now, looking back on that experience, Debbie sees many similarities between Browndale and a religious cult — the demand for an almost total time commitment, the immersion in a set of applied beliefs, and the domination of a powerful leader.

Partners and friends

Ironically, Debbie Mason first met Don Waterhouse at a group therapy session which combined the staff members from various residences. She recognized something different in the way he expressed himself there, and was immediately attracted to him. As they began to see more of each other, Don was able to show her some of the more positive aspects of the Browndale theories. Debbie's knowledge of the Bible and her Christian faith attracted Don, who had many questions about God's ways from his eager but isolated Bible readings. Two-and-a-half years after their first meeting, Don Waterhouse and Debbie Mason were married.

During those same years Don and Debbie developed other important friendships. An artistic young man, Jake Pothaar, became a counsellor in the residence where Don worked, and in time, as they worked together, Jake was led to a living faith in Jesus Christ. Jake's financee Doris, who worked in another Browndale residence, at first resented the way Jake's character was being changed through his friendship with Don. However, Jake and Doris went through with their wedding plans, and in time Doris too was led to a Christian faith. Friendship and partnership between the Pothaars and the Waterhouses has continued to this day.

Things came to a boil

Meanwhile, Don Waterhouse began to share some of his wife's misgivings about the limitations of Browndale methods. He remembers particularly a time when a resident died under tragic circumstances. Staff members talked with the surviving children about this death, and again encouraged them to express their fear and anger about the tragedy, but the conversations stopped there. There was no Christian hope here, and no answers to the most important questions in life.

When Don Waterhouse talked freely about his own beliefs, he was pointedly told that he could not force his ideas on the children, but could only explain his own beliefs if questioned about them. Through this experience and others like it, Don and Debbie developed a growing sense of detachment from Browndale, and a desire to start up their own, scripturally-based group home.

Before they had a chance to act on this idea, their work was disrupted by a power struggle among the Browndale directors. Marvin Brown, who had been directing the Browndale residences in their area, accused his brother John Brown of misusing government funds. Many Browndale staff members believed the accusation, became disillusioned with the organization, and resigned.

Since the children still have to be cared for despite this staff exodus, Don and Debbie decided they could not resign. Instead they asked for and were granted an interview with a Browndale director, who assured them that all government monies could be properly accounted for. Meanwhile, new staff members were being hired and trained, and in October, 1976, the Waterhouses were able to take a vacation and leave their residents in the care of new staff members.

However, when they came back from vacation, they found the new staff members undermining much of what they were doing with their children, and they also learned that the Browndale organization was under police investigation. In addition, Don received word from England that his mother was seriously ill. In November, 1976, Don and Debbie Waterhouse resigned from the Browndale organization and arranged a flight to England to visit Don's family there. This interlude began a new chapter in their lives.

Ron Rupke is an agent for the Christian Labour Association of Canada. He and Margaret and children live in Woodbridge, Ontario.

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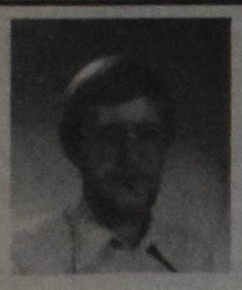

MEDIA SCAN

Henry Knoop

The medium is still the message

The title of this column is a quotation from Marshall McLuhan that became famous a generation ago. One doesn't hear much about this idea anymore, yet the suggestions inherent in McLuhan's expression are as relevant today as they were in the sixties.

McLuhan's concept of what constituted a medium was wider than what most people considered it to be at the time. Even today we are more familiar, for example, with expressions such as the "news media" or the "electronic media" — we know a newspaper or a magazine or television is a medium of communication. But McLuhan challenged us to think of a medium as *any means* whereby mankind extends itself, any means whereby we communicate something about ourselves. Clothes, for example, can be seen as a medium because what we wear speaks volumes to others; our possessions do the same; our technology likewise.

Changes by having

McLuhan cautioned society to not only pay attention to the content of a particular medium, but also to start paying attention to the medium itself. For example, many people are concerned about what is being shown *on* television: is the programming of good quality, is it morally responsible, etc. But what about the prior question: what changes will occur just by *having* a television. How will it affect what you do with your time, how you entertain, where you get your information, even how you arrange your furniture?

It is unfortunate that a quarter century after McLuhan's ideas were popular, we as a society seem to have done so very little with his basic concern. How seriously have we questioned or considered the "message" being presented by the discovery and development of so much new technology (media) that has emerged in recent years?

The popularity of personal computers comes quickly to mind. We hear a lot about what computers can do *for* us; we hear very little about what computers do *to* us. As with television above, what changes will occur just by *having* a computer? Will the computer do for us as a society what the pocket calculator has done for children in our schools? No doubt there are tremendous benefits, but has anyone counted the costs? When I bought my personal computer, I put my typewriter on the shelf. Are we as a society aware of what we lose every time we bring into our homes something new?

Evaluating the medium

And there are a lot of new developments. Our homes have sprouted clock radios in every bedroom: how has this changed the way we wake up every morning? Most urban homes have anywhere between three and five jacks for multiple telephones: what do we lose for the sake of convenience? Many of our homes have more than one television set: what has been given up to accommodate individual taste? The same question can be asked about walkmans.

Microwaves have revolutionized the kitchen. The subcompact automobile has mobilized millions. Telecommunications is a business essential. Videocassette recorders have had tremendous impact on the entertainment industry. Computers have infiltrated every aspect of modern society.

"The medium is the message" tells me that all these developments are not necessarily bad, but how will I ever be in a position to evaluate a particular medium unless I begin by looking at how that medium will change my life. Does having a clock radio mean parents won't wake up children anymore? Does having a microwave mean no more home baking? Does the extension phone privatize adolescent relationships? Does video technology destroy family viewing?

These are pretty important questions for the well-being of our society. Are we as a society still asking them? Or is our apathy to these questions a message in itself.

Henry Knoop teaches English and Media Studies at Durham Christian High in Bowmanville, Ontario.

The year of the Lord's favour

... continued from page 8.

noteworthy individual exceptions, the institutional church does not appear to have a very good reputation among many families of children with handicaps. My experiences of the past year, consummated by a sermon on Christian education which gave legitimacy to the exclusion of those with handicaps does nothing but reinforce that reputation and give weight to the opinion of those Christian school supporters whose views are based largely on a lack of awareness.

However, in the context of these diverse experiences, the following words from Luke 3 speak more powerfully every time I read or hear them:

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners, and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.

It is striking that following John's call for repentance because the Kingdom of God is at hand, Christ quotes this passage from Isaiah to announce that through him, it has now come to pass. The poor, the prisoners, the oppressed and the disabled are those for whom the impact is most immediately noteworthy to the author.

Luke, the physician, in telling his readers about Christ's work, is especially sensitive to the sick and disabled as chapter after chapter he tells us that the sick were healed and the disabled restored, thereby testifying to the reality of the kingdom. It is, therefore, most peculiar that pulpits would still speak of "legitimate exceptions," and staunch Christian school supporters still resist including the education of "all" children of Christian parents as the *raison d'etre* of societies for Christian education.

Clergymen/women and Christian school supporters would do well to listen to the words Christ read. Churches and Christian schools should not be speaking of "legitimate exceptions" under any conditions if they genuinely seek to be the instruments for the coming of the Kingdom. Rather, they should be in the forefront, proclaiming the year of the Lord's favour and seeking new ways for all persons to participate fully in the life of the community.

Jake Kuiken lives in Calgary, Alberta.

Lament for a Son among top ten Christian books

Marian Van Til

Nicholas Wolterstorff's *Lament for a Son* (reviewed in C.C.'s Sept. 18 issue) has been voted number seven on *Eternity* magazine's "Book of the Year" list, says an Evangelical Press news release. The book tied for seventh with a volume on modern American religion by University of Chicago theologian Martin Marty.

Each year, *Eternity*, submits a list of about 200 books, published over the last 12 months, to a voting group of writers, theologians and other Christian leaders. Each person has 12 votes to distribute among the 200 titles and can vote for one title up to three times.

Wolterstorff teaches philosophy at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan. His *Lament* wrestles with the grief he experienced at the death of one of his sons who was killed in a mountain climbing accident in Europe.

Another writer known to Reformed Christians, Lewis B. Smedes, also was near the top. Smedes's *Choices* was tenth on the list.

Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til

Suspect

Rated AA
Stars Cher, Dennis Quaid, Liam Neeson, John Mahoney, Joe Mantegna
Directed by Peter Yates

Suspect is a tense, intelligent, well-acted film. Cher plays a Washington-based lawyer, physically tired and mentally drained from her too-many years as a public defender. Dennis Quaid is a smooth but likeable lobbyist who gets saddled with jury duty (that's how he sees it at first) in one of the public defender's cases.

Liam Neeson is a Vietnam vet who has gradually slipped into the transients' black hole of poverty and loneliness. His solitariness is compounded by a post-war loss of hearing and speech. So when the body of a young legal clerk is found afloat among Potomac River debris a few dozen yards from the derelict's drain-pipe home, and he's found with the woman's wallet, he is charged with murder; an open and shut case — the evidence is there, and he has a history of violence.

The public defender begins to doubt his guilt, as does the lobbyist-forced-to-be-juror. The juror uncovers clues and leaves them for the lawyer. It is illegal, of course, for them to have contact as long as the trial lasts. But the greater moral dilemma of the lawyer's growing certainty that an innocent man will be found guilty of murder causes her to gradually accept the juror's help.

The juror-public defender collaboration may be a bit unrealistic, and the innocent-man-is-accused story may be less than original, but director Yates's handling of this over-used plot is highly creative.

There are a couple of exceptional scenes in which there is little or no dialogue; but all the while Yates's camera speaks eloquently, grippingly.

The film also hinges — again subtly — on the theme of hidden corruption in government. Yates shows how the *process* of politics can lead to the blurring of ethical lines and eventually, gross, self-serving power-mongering. The somewhat surprising ending is no real surprise in such a world.

Yates proves (for those who have doubts) that movies need not be devoid of a sense of morality or justice in order to be entertaining.

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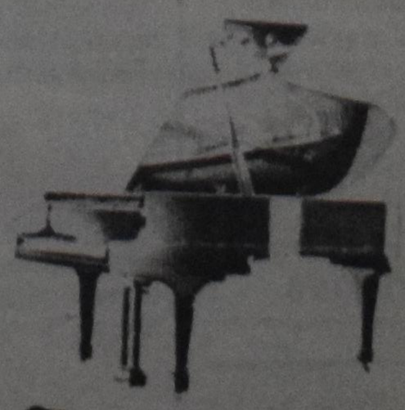

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Note our new address: Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd., 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9

Births

DEJONG: Wayne and Marcia, with joy and thankfulness to the Lord, wish to announce the arrival of a son, MARK ADRIAN, born Oct. 19, 1987. Janine and Sarah are thrilled to have a baby brother! Happy grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Herman deJong of Jordan Station and Mr. and Mrs. Gerry Fluit of St. Catharines.
3042 Dumaurier Ave., Ottawa, ON K2B 8J2
John 16:21

KAMMINGA: With great joy and thankfulness to God, the giver of all life, we, Webb and Sandra, are pleased to announce the birth of EMILY ANN, born Oct. 2, 1987, a sister for John and Jennifer. Emily is the seventh grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. John B. Visscher and also for Mr. and Mrs. John Kamminga.
8 Mercer St., Guelph, ON N1H 2E7

STORTEBOOM-RUTTERS: "Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good." (Ps. 135:3)
With thanks and praise to our heavenly Father, we, Hank and Cora, are thrilled to announce the birth of our firstborn son CALEB HENRY, born at 7:49 p.m., on Oct. 19, 1987, weighing 9 lbs. ½ oz.
Our home address is Box 134, Everett, ON L0M 1J0

Anniversaries

1937 1987
"Now thank we all our God ...."
Our parents,

COR and BEP AAY

will be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary on Saturday, Nov. 28, 1987. A reception will be held in their honour at the Zion Chr. Ref. Church, 409 Adelaide St., Oshawa, 2-5 p.m. Come and celebrate with us!
Congratulations Mom and Dad!
With much love and gratitude from your children and grandchildren:
Nettie & Fred — Escondido, Calif.
Ken & Mary — Toronto, Ont.
Henk & Chris — Grand Rapids, Mich.
Maggie & Bill — Burlington, Ont.

Miscellaneous

Durham Region Right to Life Association has audio and video materials as well as speakers available for students, teachers, clubs and churches, etc. For info. (416) 668-7911.

Anniversaries

Congratulations to Romke and Ina Postma (nee Holtrop) who will celebrate their 50th anniversary, D.V., on Dec. 15, 1987.

Leeuwarden, Fr. Brampton, Ont.
1937 December 15 1987
"Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues to all generations." (Ps. 100:4,5)
With all the praise and glory going to our heavenly Father, we thank the Lord that our parents may celebrate 50 years of marriage.

ROMKE and INA POSTMA
(nee Holtrop)

Children and grandchildren:
Jake & Maria Postma; Lance, James, Sean — Campbellville, Ont.
Wally & Bernice Postma; Scott, Walter, Christine — Hamilton, Ont.
Ted & Helen Postma; Jason, Kelly, Matthew — Burlington, Ont.
Ron Postma & Gail (friend) — Burlington, Ont.
Open house from 1:30 - 4:00 on Dec. 12, at 3422 New St., Burlington CRC.
Best wishes only, please.
Home address: 7900 McLaughlin Rd., C1202, Brampton, ON L6V 3N2

With joy and thanksgiving to our Lord, we wish to make known the 35th wedding anniversary of,

JOHN TIM and ANNA HESSELS
(nee Doggen)

With love from your children and grandchildren:
Henry & Shirley Hessels; Melissa, Craig
John Hessels
Alan & Liz Hessels; Christopher, Kimberly
Ted & Yvonne Hessels; Wesley
Rick Hessels
Dave Hessels
Ken Hessels
Open house will be held in their honour, D.V., Nov. 13, 1987, from 2-5 p.m., in Wellandport Riverside Chr. Ref. Church in the educational unit.
Home address: R.R.#1, Wellandport Rd., Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0

1957 November 16 1987
"O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is thy name in all the earth." (Ps. 8:1)
We praise and thank the Lord for blessing our parents and Opa and Oma with 30 years of marriage.
May God bless you with many more years together.

GERARD and HEIDI MEIJAARD
(nee Muys)

With much love:
Tyler & Alma Meijaard; Michael — Cambridge, Ont.
Home address: 11 Harrisford St., Unit 46, Hamilton, ON L8K 6L7

Lexmond Edmonton
1937 1987
"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him and He shall bring it to pass." (Ps. 37:5)
With praise and thanks to God for the many blessings, we are happy to announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents,

GERRIT and BERTHA VANDERMAAS
(nee Van Mazijk)

With love and congratulations from:
John & Dianne; Angie Lee
Open house will be held in the Third Chr. Ref. Church on Dec. 10, from 7-9:30.
Best wishes only.
Home address: #1710 - 13910 Stony Plain Rd., Edmonton, AB T5N 3R2

"But those of us who reverence the Lord will never lack any good thing." (Psalm 34:10b)
Thankful to the Lord, on Oct. 27, 1987, we hope to celebrate, the Lord willing, with our parents and grandparents their 50th wedding anniversary. It is our prayer that God will continue to bless them.

CORNELIUS and MARGARETHA VAN VLIET
(nee Buchner)

Their children and grandchildren:
Jane & Jake Tiggelaar — Sarnia
Terry & Wendy Tiggelaar
Cheryl & John Irwin; Jennifer
Laurie & Len (boyfriend)
Tena & Pete Vroom — Simcoe
Wayne & Annette Vroom
Julie & Don Berkel
Mike & Sue (girlfriend)
Monica
Mary & Joe Van Reenan — Sarnia
Joe, Tim, Shana
Judy & Larry Welsh — Sarnia
Tanya, Tyler
Best wishes only, please.
Home address: 203 - 1310 Exmouth St., Sarnia, ON N7S 4M8

For Sale

Obituaries

Psalm 121.
On Friday, Oct. 30, 1987, in Clearwater, Florida, the Lord took home to his church triumphant, our husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather,

HARRY DE GROOT

in his 80th year.
Beloved husband of Cora de Groot (Sheppard).
And dearly beloved father of:
Corrie & Tony Dijkxhoorn — Brownsville, Ont.
John & Susan de Groot — Smithville, Ont.
Alice & Pete de Vries — Simcoe, Ont.
Stepfather of:
William & Elizabeth Sheppard — Moncton, N.B.
Helen & John Staples — Moncton, N.B.
Connie & Roger Conrad — Eastern Passage, N.S.
Predeceased (1977) by his wife Elizabeth.
Fondly remembered by his 17 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.
R.R.#1, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

Suddenly, in a tragic accident at home, the Lord in his wisdom, took

ANDREW JERRY HOGEVEEN

to himself on Oct. 20, 1987. He has joined his sister KariSue, together happy with Jesus.
Andrew was the beloved son of Jerry and Annette Hogeveen of Jarvis, Ont.
Great-grandson of: Sietske Hogeveen — Jarvis
Grandson of:
Andy & Dinie Hogeveen — Simcoe
Arthur & Susan DeBoer — Selkirk
Nephew & cousin to:
Henry & Sharon Hogeveen and family — Hagersville
Rick & Lenore Hogeveen and family — Cayuga
Roger Hogeveen
Jim Hogeveen
Mike Hogeveen
— all of Simcoe
Bas & Rena Hania and family — Branchton
Benjamin & Anieta DeBoer and family — Selkirk
Charles & Joanne DeBoer and family — Jarvis
Martin & Jeannette Buursma and family — Grimsby
Harry & Florence VanBenthem and family — Jarvis

Prayer
Dear God, in thy hands we place
Our brother and sister so dear,
Hold them so close,
Guard them from anger, bitterness and fear.
With love, joy and peace
The emptiness fill,
That they may know each day
Each moment, you carry them still.

Andrew and Kari with Jesus
A joy none can compare.
Oh, hasten thine appearing
And bring us safely there.

"The Lord is my shepherd." (Ps. 23:1)

Oct. 10, 1987

The Lord in his infinite wisdom, took home unto himself our beloved brother and uncle,

JACOBUS KUIPERS

at the age of 73.
Beloved husband of the late Trijntje (Tina) Kuipers (Aug. 26, 1987)
Dear brother of:
Bertha Van Steinvoorn — Grand Rapids, MI
Jeanette De Jong — Hudsonville, MI
Sjoukje Spoelstra — The Netherlands
Ietje Elzinga — The Netherlands
Beloved uncle of:
Helen Van Steinvoorn — Wyoming, MI
Alice Bruggink — Grandville, MI
Klaas & Nancy Van Steinvoorn — Hudsonville, MI
Leo & Jean Van Steinvoorn — Hudsonville, MI
Jack & Barb Van Steinvoorn — Standale, MI
and families.

Lemmer, Neth. Brampton, Ont.
July 5, 1897 Oct. 23, 1987
Trusting in the full assurance of God's grace, the Lord called home on Friday, Oct. 23, 1987, our father and pake,

GERLOF VANDERGAAST

at the blessed age of 90 years.
Predeceased by his wife Grietje Kuiper on June 11, 1965.
Dear father of:
Corrie & the late Gerrit VanderGaast — Bowmanville, Ont.
Henk & Ans VanderGaast — Delfzijl, The Neth.
Albert & Trix VanderGaast — Bowmanville, Ont.
Jacob & Johanna VanderGaast — Orono, Ont.
Wiebe & Hotty VanderGaast — Bowmanville, Ont.
Jelle & Helen VanderGaast — Bowmanville, Ont.
Froukje & the late Andy Mulder — Bowmanville, Ont.
Thys & Anna VanderGaast — Lethbridge, Alta.
Anne & Hammy VanderGaast — Bowmanville, Ont.
and the late Gerlof Jan
Dear pake of 44 grandchildren and 41 great-grandchildren.
The funeral service was held on Oct. 26, 1987, at Rehoboth CRC, Bowmanville. Rev. A. DeJager officiating.
"The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love." (Psalm 103:8)
Mailing address: R.R.#6, Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K7

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth.' 'Blessed indeed,' says the Spirit, 'That they may rest from their labours, for their deeds follow them.'" (Rev. 14:13)
On Sunday, Oct. 25, 1987, after a lengthy illness, in the Lord's time, He took home into his eternal glory his child,

MARIA WILHELMINA VAN VLIET
(nee Doorduin)

at the age of 77.
Beloved wife of Willem Van Vliet
Loving mother of:
Paul & Tina Van Vliet — Niagara Falls, Ont.
Alice & Bernard Westerveld — Dunnville, Ont.
Art & Magda Van Vliet — Fenwick, Ont.
Jean & Richard Heida — Jordan, Ont.
Bill & Marg Van Vliet — Beamsville, Ont.
Dear oma of 23 grandchildren.
Mailing address: 33 Davey Court, Vineland, ON L0R 2C0

For Sale

Johannes 240, 3-manual, external speakers. Three years old. Very attractive price.

Inquire:

D&W Intercontinental Music Inc.
9563 Winston Churchill Rd.
Brampton, ON L0P 1K0
(416) 454-3442

Classifieds

Obituaries

"And they shall see his face; and his name shall be written on their foreheads, and there will be no night there — no need for lamps or sun — for the Lord God will be their light; and they shall reign forever and ever." (Rev. 22:4,5)
Suddenly, yet at God's appointed time, it pleased the Lord to take to himself our very dear friend,

HARRY WIERSMA

in his 45th year.
It is our prayer that the Lord will comfort and strengthen Lucy, her children: Laura & Jim, Michael, Cheryl and Paula.
He will be sadly missed by us all:
Peter & Ann Langendoen and family
Bill & Mary Knight and family
Peter & Lena Kiers and family
Oct. 31, 1987
St. Catharines, Ont.

"As for man, his days are like grass, he flourishes like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children — with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts." (Ps. 103:16-18)
On Oct. 31, 1987, the Lord called unto himself our beloved son- and brother-in-law,

HARRY WIERSMA

May God's abiding love be with, and strengthen, Lucy and the children.
Mr. & Mrs. Heine Sietsma — Weston, Ont.
Gerry & John Weenink; Sandra, Stephanie, Stephen — Barry, Ont.
Marijke & Andy Van Driel; David, Timothy, Scott, Rosemary — Fenwick, Ont.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation." (Ps. 27:1)
It pleased God to take into his glory our beloved husband, father and grandfather,

DOUWE WOUDSTRA

on Thursday, Oct. 8, 1987, at the age of 73 years.
Beloved husband of Grace Woudstra.
Dear father of:
Jack Woudstra — Mississauga
Jenny Woudstra-Sikkema — Georgetown
Larry & Hilda Woudstra — Hamilton
Shirley & Joe Slagter — Waterdown
Gertie & George Lammers — Millgrove
Marjanne & Richard Tigchelaar — Burlington
Bill Woudstra — Hamilton
Dear grandfather of 21 grandchildren.
The funeral took place on Saturday, Oct. 10, at Immanuel CRC in Hamilton. Rev. John Postuma officiated.
Home address: #910 790 Mohawk Rd. W., Hamilton, ON L9C 6C6

Help Wanted

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For interview by appointment call
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(519) 753-2666

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Person wanted to work on farrow to finish **hog farm.** House available. For further information contact: Four Seasons Poultry Farms, R.R.#6, Goderich, ON N7A 3Y3 or phone Harry at 519-529-7982 or Ron at 519-529-7697

Wholesale nursery is looking for persons to work in our **container growing nursery.** Experience is not essential. However, a person must be self-motivated and willing to learn about container growing. These positions are full-time employment.
Please send resume to: Willowbrook Nurseries Inc., Box 100, Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0

Help wanted on **dairy farm** in Alberta. Close to town, CRC, Chr. school and pavement. General knowledge of farming required. Will train under the Alberta Green Program. Position ideal for married couple; house available. Write: Big Bend Dairy, R.R.#1, Rocky Mountain House, AB T0M 1T0 or phone (403) 845-6432.

Hard-working, dependable, safety-conscious person wanted immediately for landscaping firm that deals with fencing, sodding, interlocking stone and tree planting, trimming, removal. Experience preferred but will train the right person. Please write to: The Tree Man, R.R.#5, Rockwood, ON (near Guelph) N0B 2K0 or tel. (evenings only) (519) 836-5959 and ask for Ed Kuipery.

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200 acres open bottom land. Two barns for beef and hogs. Could easily adapt one barn to dairy. Licensed gravel pit at rear of farm. Some hardwood bush. Four-bedroom home.
290 acres, 45 cow free stall barn. Heifer barn. Double four milking parlour. Two silos. Four-bedroom brick home.
Above properties, some in Wallace twp., served by Christian school and church.
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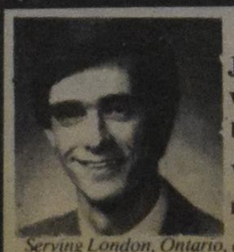

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For Rent

Florida-Gulf of Mexico: 2-bedroom condo, ideal family place in Indian Rocks, very private, heated pool, across road from beach. Available until Jan. 23, 1988. Rent rates US $350-500 per week. Phone Toronto: 226-1137 or 785-0794.

Calvinist Contact keeping the community informed.

Teachers

GEORGETOWN: The Georgetown District Chr. School is in need of a **primary teacher** from Jan. 4 — June 30, 1988. Applicants are invited to send their resume to: Mr. George Petrusma, Principal, R.R.1, Georgetown, ON L7G 4S4. Phone: (416) 877-4221.

For Sale

For sale in St. Petersburg, Florida: 20' by 40' mobile home on 50' by 55' rented waterfront lot in nice adult park. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 8' by 12' glassed-in porch, carport, utility shed, washer, dryer, fully furnished, central heat and air conditioning, 7 years new, ready for occupancy, $32,000 U.S. Call 616-245-2049 U.S. or 519-752-4413 Canada.

Accommodations

Bed & Breakfast
Kom terug naar Nederland. U kunt logeren aan de rand van Utrecht, F.150.00 per persoon per week. Inlichtingen: Mvr. Sneller, Pr. Irene Laan 53, Utrecht, or call G. Van Soelen (416) 454-1295 after 6 p.m.

Teachers

John Knox Christian School Society
of Mississauga
is accepting applications for the position of part-time teaching staff in the following areas:

Junior kindergarten and kindergarten
which is required immediately

Phy. Ed. — all grades
required mid spring

Part-time positions could be combined for the right person. A commitment to the Reformed world and life view is necessary.

Please contact:
Lorna Keith, Principal
at (416) 822-8131
or
Anne Veeneman, education committee
at (416) 844-6454

Director/Therapist

to assume responsibility for managing a Christian counselling agency. A Master's level degree or better in a social science is desired. Clinical experience in the provision of individual, marital and family therapy is essential. Experience working with a Board of Directors and in community relations is also preferred though not essential. Please submit a written resume as well as a statement outlining how you integrate your faith with your therapy, by December 31, 1987, to:

Dick Farenhorst, Ph.D.
201 - 14980 - 104 Ave., Surrey, B.C. V3R 1M9
Location: Prince George, British Columbia

The Ontario Christian School Teachers' Association (OCSTA)
invites applications for the position of

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In co-operation with the OCSTA Board of Directors the Executive Director will:
— manage the daily business needs of the 650 association members
— develop and supervise professional growth opportunities for the OCSTA membership
— initiate discussions and provide opportunities for planning and implementing matters relevant to the future direction of the Christian school movement in Ontario and other provinces served by OCSTA
— serve as liaison for the OCSTA membership to CSI, the OACSS, the OCSAA, the Ministry of Education and related organizations.

The applicant should be a professional educator certified and qualified to teach in and/or administer Christian schools in Ontario. Preferential consideration will be given to applicants with advanced degrees and/or a demonstrated ability to be involved in Christian education in Ontario. The position is full-time commencing August 1, 1988. Salary and benefits commensurate with education and experience. Applications will be accepted until November 30, 1987.

Direct your application or inquiries to:
"Search Committee, OCSTA"
c/o Hank Hultink
547 West Fifth St., Hamilton, ON L9C 3P7
Phone: 1-416-388-2645

Lacombe Christian School
is searching for a

principal

for the 1988/89 school year.

- Position involves some teaching
- A CSI school — grades K-9
- Interdenominational
- Current enrolment 274
- 13 full-time; 3 part-time teaching staff
- Situated on Calgary/Edmonton corridor in the "heart" of Alberta

For information contact:
Jack Oudman
R.R.3, Lacombe, AB T0C 1S0
Phone: (403) 782-2667

Calgary Christian School

in Calgary, Alberta
is seeking a

teacher/principal

for the 88/89 term.
The established modern school facility has a total enrolment of 400 students (ECS through Grade 12) and a staff of 24.
Candidates should have three year prior principal experience with demonstrated administrative skills, and ability to motivate people, have a vision for Christian education and be able to communicate that in the Christian and greater community.
Depending on the candidate and circumstances, longer contract terms are possible. Interested candidates should send their resume to:

Bert Hagens
3135 - 47 St. S.W.
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Events

By this they know love.

1 John 3:16–18

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Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8

Extend your Christmas Wishes through Calvinist Contact.

Mailing Christmas cards to all your family and friends can be expensive. Yet Christmas is an extra-special time to greet one another and share in the celebration of our Saviour's birth.

Calvinist Contact is pleased to offer you the opportunity to extend Christmas Wishes in our special Christmas Issue, December 4. (Published early to insure readers across the country receive it on time)

As well as reaching our regular subscribers, thousands of additional copies will be sent to the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada.

The cost of placing this ad is $15. *Calvinist Contact* should receive your greeting and cheque before November 23.

Mail to:
Calvinist Contact
Christmas Greetings
4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9

SAMPLE:

VAN DER: We wish all our family and friends a blessed Christmas and God's peace in the New Year. Jane, Tom, Sally and Peter Van Der.

Calendar of Events

Nov. 14	Back to God Hour Rally at 7:30 p.m. in Redeemer College Auditorium, **Ancaster,** Ont. Dr. Joel Nederhood will speak on: "Free to Live."
Nov. 14	Fifth Annual All-Ontario Calvinette & Cadet Conference at Woodland Chr. High School, **Breslau,** Ont. For info. call Audrey Boersma (519) 237-3436.
Nov. 14	Conference 5 of Cadet & Calvinette Counsellors in Woodland Chr. Secondary School, near **Breslau,** Ont. Registration deadline Nov. 6, 1987.
Nov. 14	"The Ambassadors" in concert to celebrate the new CRC in Brighton, at 7:30 p.m., in the Ebenezer CRC, **Trenton,** Ont.
Nov. 18	Organ dedication recital at 8 p.m., in CRC, **Exeter,** Ont. Recitalist: John W. Vandertuin.
Nov. 20	Public rally of the Christian Heritage Party of Canada at 8 p.m., in Hamilton Place, **Hamilton,** Ont. Finale to CHP's founding convention. OCMA led by Leendert Kooij and organist Andre Knevel will perform. Premiere of film "Canada's Christian Culture." Order tickets by phoning (416) 648-0863.
Nov. 20	Informal evening with Back to God Hour's Rev. Bassam Madany at 8 p.m. in Maranatha CRC, **Cambridge,** Ont. Opportunity for discussion.
Nov. 21	Bazaar at Calvin Memorial Chr. School, Scott St., **St. Catharines,** Ont. Lunch from 12 to 1:30 p.m. Supper from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Nov. 21	Back to God Hour Rally at 8 p.m. in St. George's Anglican Church, **Guelph,** Ont. Speaker: Rev. Bassam Madany. Music: Leendert Kooij's O.C.M.A. with Andre Knevel at the organ.
Nov. 21	Arts & Crafts Festival at TDCH, **Woodbridge,** Ont.
Nov. 23-26	Christian Counselling Service of S.W. Ontario (Classis Chatham) organizational membership meetings: **Nov. 23,** 8 p.m. in First CRC, **London,** Ont.; Nov. 25, 8 p.m., First CRC, **Sarnia,** Ont.; **Nov. 26,** 8 p.m., Calvary CRC, **Chatham,** Ont.
Nov. 25	CPJ meeting at 7:30 p.m. at Redeemer Chr. High school, **Ottawa,** Ont. Speaker: Ian Shugart on day-care legislation. Everyone welcome. For info. call Christina Pleizier at (613) 835-2293.
Nov. 28	Organ Concert at Mountainview CRC, **Grimsby,** Ont. at 8 p.m. featuring organist Andre Knevel and Heather Kikkert, soprano. Free will offering.
Dec. 2	"Farming in New Directions" — CFFO Annual Convention and Banquet at Italian Canadian Club of **Guelph.** Convention $15; banquet $15 (student rates available). For info. and registration (deadline noon, Nov. 27) call (519) 837-1620.
Dec. 3	CCEF 12th Anniversary Rally in First Chr. Ref. Church, **Sarnia,** Ont. Co-sponsored by Sarnia Chr. School (in conjunction with its 30th anniversary) and other area-Christian schools. Feature speaker: Rev. John D. Hellinga.
Dec. 5	Handel's "Messiah" presented by "Laudate Dominum Choir" with organist Dick DeJonge at 8 p.m. in St. Andrew's United Church, **Chatham,** Ont.
Dec. 9	Special organ recital by John W. Vandertuin at 8 p.m. in the concert hall of W. Ross MacDonald School, **Brantford,** Ont.

Why not place an ad in Calvinist Contact?

Advertising deadlines

Dated	Mailed	Two column ad deadline	Classified deadline
Fri. Nov. 20	Tues. Nov. 17	Wed. Nov. 11-8:30a.m.	Thurs. Nov. 12-8:30a.m.
Fri. Nov. 27	Tues. Nov. 24	Wed. Nov. 18-8:30a.m.	Thurs. Nov. 19-8:30a.m.
Fri. Dec. 4	Tues. Dec. 1	Wed. Nov. 25-8:30a.m.	Thurs. Nov. 26-8:30a.m.

Attention: Business Community Insert YOUR message in our special 1987 Christmas issue

Calvinist Contact is planning a special 1987 Christmas issue.

Date of this issue will be **December 4.** It will be mailed to our regular subscribers on **December 1.**

In addition, we plan to distribute thousands of copies of the Christmas issue to Reformed Christians across the continent free of charge.

To print so many extra copies costs money. We are appealing to the business community, among others, to help us out.

Please do not wait. Take a moment to complete and return the attached coupon.

Deadline for advertisements in the Christmas issue is November 20!!!

Check one

1) **Business Card** — Size about 3" x 1¾" ☐
Cost: $75

2) **1/8 Page** — Size 5" x 3½" ☐
Cost: $125

3) **1/4 Page** — Size 5" x 7½" ☐
Cost: $250

4) **Half Page** — Size 10" x 7½" ☐
Cost: $500

5) **Full Page** — Size 10" x 15" ☐
Cost: $900

6) **Sponsorship Advertising** ☐
I do not wish to place my own ad, but will gladly sponsor a Christian organization advertisement. I understand *Calvinist Contact* will obtain copy from the organization indicated.

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This ad should be of the size ____ full-page $900
____ half-page $500
____ 1/4-page $250
____ 1/8-page $125
____ card $75

Please enclose your ad copy with this coupon.

_____ I enclose payment _____ Please bill me

Sender: (*Please print*)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Prov. _____ Code _____

Return by November 20 to: Calvinist Contact
4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9

Praise the Lord with organ & trumpet!

Christmas concert with internationally known artists

JAN OVERDUIN — Organ

and

ERIK SCHULTZ — Trumpet

Both are professors of music at the University of Waterloo and the University of Western Ontario.

Place: Clarkson Christian Reformed Church
1880 Lakeshore Road, West
Mississauga, Ontario
(ample parking behind the church)

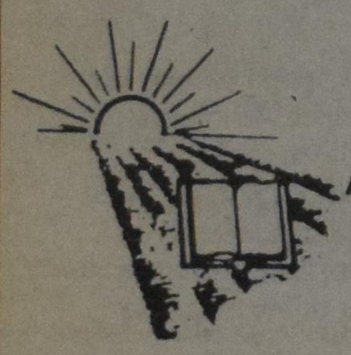
Date: **Friday, December 11, 1987**

Time: **8:00 p.m.**

The concert will feature works by J.S. Bach, D. Buxtehude, G.Ph. Telemann, T. Albinoni, C. Balbastre and G. Tartini.

Tickets: $8.00 adults; $4.00 seniors/students

For reservations please call:
823-2956 or 227-9112 (area code 416)



"Farming With New Directions"

Annual Convention and Banquet
Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario

Date:	Wednesday, December 2, 1987, D.V.
Time:	10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Banquet: 5:30 p.m.
Location:	Italian Canadian Club of Guelph 135 Ferguson St., Guelph, Ontario
Keynote Speaker:	Mr. Edward Lotterman, Faculty member, Agricultural & Applied Economics Dept., University of Minnesota.
Afternoon Speakers:	Steven Price, World Wildlife Fund, Toronto: "Preserving our Natural Habitat on the Farm" Rick Winter, Dept. of Foreign Affairs: "Animal Welfare: a Biblical Perspective"
Banquet Speaker:	Dr. Joseph Connell, Educator & Consultant, Kitchener: "Motivation in our Changing Times"
Special Feature:	Cambridge Choral Group

For pre-registration call
CFFO office, Guelph at (519) 837-1620
Deadline: Friday noon, November 27

Looking for employment?
Why not check our classifieds.

Christian Reformed Church

Called

— to All Nations, Halifax, N.S., Cand. David Kromminga.

— to Shalom, Brantford, Ont., Rev. Leonard Batterink of Essex, Ont.

New secretary of deacons

— Iron Springs, Alberta CRC: Jerry Kiers, Box 177, Iron Springs, AB T0K 1G0.

Classis meetings

— **Classis Huron:** Jan. 13, 1988; Drayton, Ont. CRC.

— **Classis Niagara:** Jan. 20, 1988; Bethany, Fenwick, Ont. CRC.

Classis Toronto: Jan. 28, 1988; Newmarket, Ont. CRC.

New clerk

— First, London, Ont.: Peter Vander Leek, 6 Ruskin Court, London, ON N6G 1S8

Com-mit-ment

This year almost 300 students committed themselves to Christian education at Redeemer College. Now you can join people in 100 communities in Eastern Canada in a commitment to help support them and others in that choice.

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London: 519-672-3161

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As a way of extending our congratulations, C.C. will publish anniversary pictures **free of charge** for those couples celebrating 50 years or more together.

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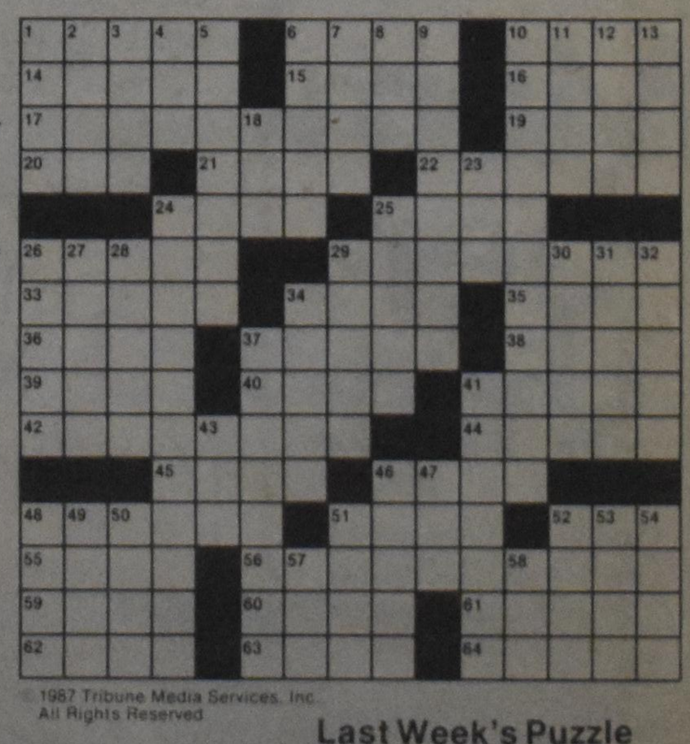
Tel: (416) 741-2140
or
Meadowvale Travel Inc.
(416) 826-4141

Weekly Crossword

by Florence C. Adler



ACROSS
1 Garret
6 Herring
10 Dictator
14 Valerie Harper role
15 Flog
16 Emanation
17 Tyrannical
19 Medical photo
20 Half a fly?
21 Cattle old style
22 Strangers
24 Map
25 Geraint's wife
26 Root used for soap
29 Educated
33 Wanderer
34 Dried up
35 City on the Tiber
36 — and bear it!
37 Step
38 "Of — and Men"
39 It. city
40 Yield
41 Stacked
42 Renovates
44 Onagers
45 Of grandparents
46 Dray
48 Petty ruler
51 Excellent
52 Health club
55 Russ. mountain range
56 Calligraphy
59 Aleutian isle
60 Overdue
61 Vestige
62 Gad
63 Quod — demonstrandum
64 Detection device

DOWN
1 Smell — (be suspicious)
2 Sic
3 Lug
4 Altar words
5 Laughed shrilly
6 Meager
7 Abhor
8 Cuckoo
9 Carafe
10 Man with the right stuff?
11 Certain
12 Ir. island group
13 Beams
18 Creek
23 Ignited
24 Heavenly model?
25 Uncanny
26 Wrath
27 — Code
28 Leaves out
29 Guides
30 Stirs up
31 Host
32 Property documents
34 Building material
37 Ground meat dish
41 Mom and Dad
43 Eggs
46 Sky streaker
47 Collection of anecdotes
48 Ger. region
49 Palo —, Cal.
50 Toodle-oo
51 Square pillar
52 Burmese tribe
53 Type size
54 Mimic
57 Attention
58 Theater sign

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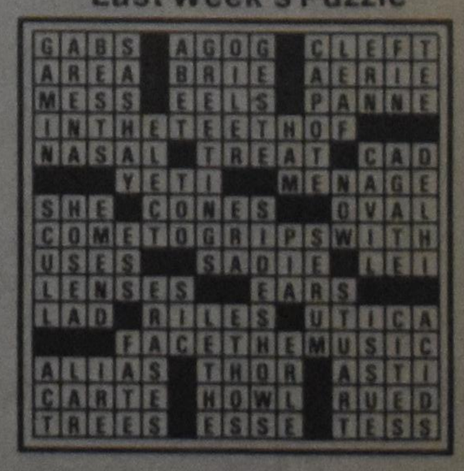
Last Week's Puzzle



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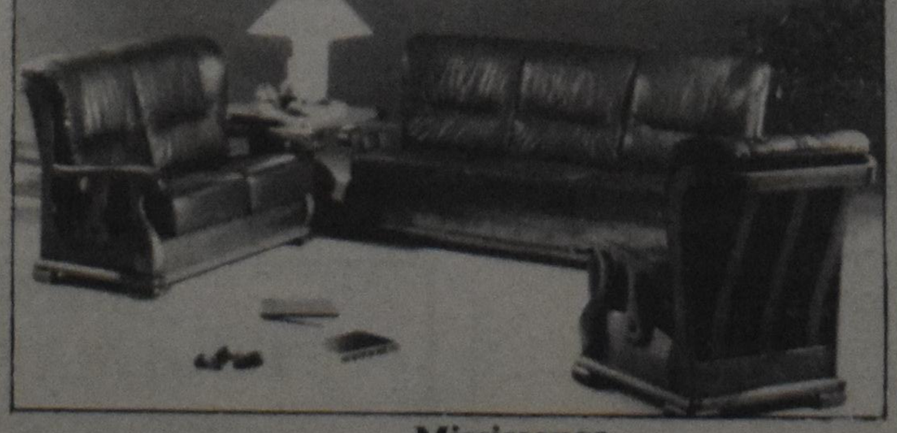

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Dutch

Als je 't mij vraagt

Syrt Wolters

Wat denk je van de nieuwe Premier van British Columbia?

Als geboren nederlander hebben jullie natuurlijk allemaal wel gehoord, dat in British Columbia een na-oorlogse nederlandse immigrant als leider van de regerende Social Credit Party gekozen is, en dus meteen premier werd. Nou, dat deed ons nederlandse hart nog eens goed, of niet?

Eén van m'n klanten, zelf een ex-burgemeester van Victoria, had ik in de stoel kort nadat Bill Vander Zalm gekozen was. Schertsend zei hij: "Nou moet het toch niet gekker worden, Syrt. Dit moet gestopt worden. Stel je voor: we hebben een nederlandse melkman; een nederlandse bakker; ik heb een nederlandse kapper and nou, nota bene, een nederlandse premier! Wat verbeelden jullie je wel?"

Ik kon niet helpen te zeggen: "Wij kunnen het toch niet helpen dat jullie hebben zitten slapen?" We moesten er beiden om lachen.

Er is geen twijfel aan dat om het feit, dat Bill Vander Zalm een nederlander is, een goed aantal nederlanders van afkomst hard gewerkt hebben om hem de verkiezing te doen winnen. En ik weet van een goed aantal mensen die lid zijn van een Christian Reformed Church, dat ze hun uiterste best gedaan hebben om Vander Zalm er in te krijgen.

Nu moet ik zeggen dat die Vander Zalm een flinke kerel is. Hij is Rooms Katholiek, en ik heb de indruk, dat hij niet zo maar een nominale roomse is. Als bloemenkweker heeft hij zich goed opgewerkt. Hij is burgemeester geweest in Surrey, een 'suburb' van Vancouver. Toen liet hij al van zich spreken vanwege zijn onbevreesd positie nemen in verschillende zaken. Dat dwong respect af bij veel mensen.

Als je 't mij vraagt, heeft hij wel iets van Churchill in hem: "Je kunt me krijgen, maar op mijn termen!" Zo niet dan ga ik weer! Ik mag dat wel; het toont dat hij meer van een staatsman heeft dan van een politicus. Hij heeft ruggegraat.

Maar moeten we hem daarom volgen en reclame voor hem maken?

Enkele jaren geleden was Vander Zalm een minister van het kabinet. Het gerucht gaat dat hij ontslag nam en het kabinet beschuldigde van geen 'durf' te hebben. Dat het publiek hem wel mocht bleek wel bij de verkiezing van de nieuwe leider. Hij won met een grote meerderheid van stemmen.

Toen hij minister was heeft hij ook zijn haar bij mij laten knippen. Ik ken hem persoonlijk: een joviale, eerlijke kerel. Toen hij gekozen was heb ik hem een brief geschreven en hem gelukgewenst. Gelukgewenst in de zin van hem het beste te wensen in zijn positie. Tenslotte — nu is hij ook mijn hoofd van de overheid. En ik ben geroepen om hem te eren en voor hem te bidden.

Maar dat wil niet zeggen dat ik accoord ga met zijn politieke visie. Heeft hij zich niet vereenzelvigd met Social Credit, de politieke partij, welke nergens blijk geeft dat het de scheppings-ordinanties voor politiek wenst te volgen? Van Vander Zalm kan ik me dat begrijpen; tenslotte is hij Rooms en grootgebracht met de ideën van Thomas Aquinas, die beweerde dat het leven bestaat uit twee lagen: een lagere, de natuurlijke; en een hogere; een geestelijke. Nu — politiek behoort tot dat lage natuurlijke van het leven en heeft dus weinig te maken met dat hogere, geestelijke leven.

Maar dat er onder ons mensen zijn, die niet meer zien, dat "alles in het leven godsdienst is," en heel pragmatisch een politicus steunen, omdat hij een Rooms Katholieke Christen is, afgezien van de partij die hij vertegenwoordigt, daar kan ik niet bij. Met de mond te belijden dat alles in het leven onderworpen is aan een goede en een verkeerde weg, maar dit in de praktijk gemakshalve aan de kant zetten. Dan kan ik niet helpen me af te vragen: Hoe serieus was die belijdenis, dat heel het leven moet beantwoorden aan Gods ordinanties?

Zoals ik in een vorige kolom schreef, is er een Christelijke politieke Partij in Canada. Ik had graag gezien dat eerst de 'gemeenschap der heiligen' zich in de maatschappij kenbaar gemaakt had als een 'christelijke gemeenschap' voor welke het onmogelijk is om de bestaande politieke partijen te steunen of er voor te stemmen. Ik geloof stellig dat die "gemeenschap van Gods kinderen in de wereld" min of meer vanzelfsprekend actief de politieke problemen schriftuurlijk zou benaderen. En als dat dan een partij genoemd moet worden, dan kan ik daar vrede mee hebben.

We moeten bekend worden in de wereld als 'de stem van de gelovigen,' niet alleen politiek, ook economisch, sociaal en wat je maar hebt. Jezus Christus bad zo vurig om de "eenheid van Zijn kinderen, ALS ZE IN DE WERELD ZIJN." Johannes 17.

Maar zolang Christenen zich vereenzelvigen met verschillende partijen, die het koningschap van Christus niet erkennen, verlammen we de komst van Gods rijk op dat terrein.

Syrt Wolters is kapper in Victoria, British Columbia.

Laatste bekendmaking over het Nederlanderschap

Zoals reeds eerder bekend is gemaakt, is op 1 januari 1985 een nieuwe Wet op het Nederlanderschap in werking getreden.

Een belangrijke wijziging is, dat kinderen van een Nederlandse moeder, die geboren zijn vóór 1 januari 1985, Nederlander kunnen worden. Deze kinderen, mits zij op 1 januari 1985 nog geen 21 jaar oud waren, kunnen volgens een overgangsbepaling op eenvoudige wijze de Nederlandse nationaliteit verkrijgen.

Indien zij jonger zijn dan 18 jaar, kan de moeder — die op 1 januari 1985 Nederlandse was — voor al haar wettige en niet-wettige kinderen een optieverklaring afleggen, waardoor de kinderen onmiddellijk de Nederlandse nationaliteit verkrijgen, in veel gevallen naast de nationaliteit die zij aan hun buitenlandse vader ontlenen.

Indien de kinderen de leeftijd van 18 jaar hebben bereikt, moeten zij zelf de optieverklaring afleggen. Hierbij gaat het alleen om kinderen, die op 1 januari 1985 nog geen 21 jaar oud waren.

Deze overgangsbepaling was van kracht gedurende drie jaar, dus een kind dat op 1 januari 1985 21 jaar werd, heeft tot *1 januari 1988* de tijd om door het afleggen van een verklaring tevens de Nederlandse nationaliteit te verkrijgen.

Verlies Nederlanderschap door meerderjarige Nederlanders

Een meerderjarige Nederlander verliest de Nederlandse nationaliteit:

a. door het vrijwillig verkrijgen van een andere nationaliteit;

b. wanneer betrokkene na zijn meerderjarigheid (dus 18 jaar) gedurende een ononderbroken periode van 10 jaar woonplaats buiten het Koninkrijk heeft in een land waarin hij is geboren en waarvan hij eveneens de nationaliteit bezit.

Verlies Nederlanderschap door minderjarige Nederlanders

Een minderjarige Nederlander verliest de Nederlandse nationaliteit:

a. indien zijn vader of moeder een andere nationaliteit verkrijgt en hij in die verkrijging deelt of deze nationaliteit reeds bezit;

b. indien zijn vader of moeder de Nederlandse nationaliteit verliest, anders dan door verkrijging van een andere nationaliteit;

c. indien hij zelfstandig dezelfde nationaliteit verkrijgt als zijn vader en moeder.

In al deze gevallen verliest de minderjarige echter *niet* de Nederlandse nationaliteit zolang één van zijn ouders Nederlander is.

Voor verdere inlichtingen kunt U zich wenden tot het:

Consulaat-Generaal der Nederlanden
1 Dundas Street West, Suite 2106
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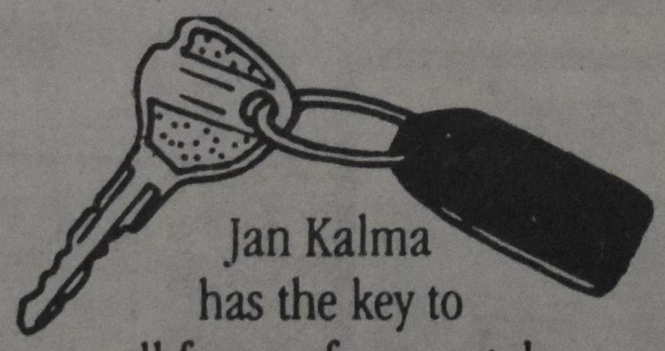

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Also Dutch Law

Kommentaar met een knipoog

Laten we pret hebben

Herman de Jong

In mijn vorige verhaal hadden we het over een zekere triestheid dat als een waas over Nederland hangt. Dat wil niet zeggen, dat het hier onder ons in Canada zo'n lollige boel is. Is het u ook opgevallen dat wij steeds ernstiger beginnen te worden? Misschien ligt het aan mijn oude dag, maar ik vind het vaak maar een saaie boel onder ons, hoor! Als ik in dit en mijn vorig verhaal wat overdrijf — ach nou, ik ben wat neerslachtig! Vocht in m'n knie; van het fietsen in Nederland.

Ik steek eerst mijn hand in eigen boezem. Ik betrap me er zelf op, dat ik nu vaak leuke situaties met een smartelijk gezicht voorbij loop. Ook heb ik de kunst om de knuppel in een ernstig hoenderhok te gooien, bijna verloren. Als ik nog es wakker wordt met een extroverte drang om vandaag es wat gek-vrolijke dingen te doen, ben ik bij het aankleden alweer zo ernstig gestemd dat ik een stemmig-grijze das verkies boven die fijne helrode Peterson das.

Nou is bij Peterson die das als een vlag op een oorlogsschip; hij kijkt nog weemoediger dan Mulroney (het zal ook niet meevallen je gezicht uit de plooi te krijgen met zo'n stevig kaakgestel.) Nee, ik schaterlach niet zo gauw meer! In tegenstelling met onze premier zijn mijn kaken goed los, maar ik ben altijd bang, dat datgene wat zich op mijn onderkaak behoort vast te zuigen, voorwaards zal komen, en dat is toch ook geen gezicht, nou?

Verhaaltjes uit *Reader's Digest*

Ik zou geen goede gereformeerde zijn als ik er geen dominee bij betrok. Eens zat ik in een studeerkamer van zo'n olijke dominee. Zijn vlezig gelaat glom van pret. De mijne ook. We waren grapjes aan het uitwisselen. Zo vrolijk waren we dat onze wel verzorgde handen wolkjes stof uit de leren crapauds sloegen. Ik zag naast de Korte Verklaringen een hele rij *Reader's Digests* staan.

De van-pret-schuddende eerwaarde volgde mijn blik. "Ja man," zei hij naproestende, "Sommige dominees hebben boeken vol verhaaltjes die ze zo in een preek kunnen lassen om hun niet-te-loze toehoorders nog es extra met hun gepoederde en ongepoederde neuzen op de expositie van de tekst te drukken; ik gebruik daarvoor passende grapjes uit *Reader's Digest,* die zijn wat korter en pikanter.

"Maar ik doe het niet meer hoor! Vroeger klonk de schaterlach door mijn kerk en zaten er pretkringetjes rondom de ogen mijner geachte toehoorders als ze mij bij het uitgaan quasi-ernstig de hand schudden. Tegenwoordig zie je nog een paar mensen meesmuilen; nou man, je kunt je niets akeligers voorstellen dan een gemeente die PROBEERT te lachen."

U moet me goed begrijpen! Ik heb het niet over de stille blijdschap die de ware gelovige als een gloed behoort te omringen. (Ik schrijf "behoort," want ook die glans is vaak verborgen achter zorg en leed.) Ik praat nu over uitbundige vrolijkheid, de gulle lach, de hik-lach waarin sommige charmante vrouwen haast blijven, de brede lach die een herenbuikje zo leuk doet schudden! De lach die gepaard gaat met "lol," ofschoon dat korte woordje al een werelds tintje heeft gekregen.

Laten we het "pret" noemen! Waar is onze pret gebleven?

Gewichtig-ernstig

Ik maakte een classis-vergadering mee. Vroeger waren er altijd wel een paar ouderlingen of dominees die tijdens een uren-durend debat over een zeer ingewikkelde theologische zaak zich naar elkaar toebogen met een speelse opmerking, om dan achter hun handen, of vooroverbuigend, hun lach te verbijten. Je zag dan de praeses naar zijn moker grijpen om verdere hilariteiten in de kiem te smoren. Tijdens de rookpauzes klonk de gulle lach!

Nu is met de rook de lach verdwenen! Nog vindt men een zekere speelsheid in de oude garde, maar het jongere spul zat tijdens de vergadering die ik mocht meemaken, gewichtig-ernstig naar verslagen te luisteren met Noord-Amerikaanse zakelijkheid. En neem nu de gemiddelde koffie-visites. Waar is het gekscheren gebleven, de puntige opmerking, het luisteren naar een leuke gebeurtenis? Zitten we niet veeleer op de wip om een speelse gedachtengang te onderbreken met een weldoordacht relaas over een kerkelijk gebeuren op lokaal, classicaal, nationaal of internationaal niveau? Zijn we niet op weg ons gevangen te zetten in de kerkers der kerk?

Vereenzelvigen we het gesprek over de dominee die fijn, lauw of bijzonder slecht preekte, de kerkeraad die niet met beide benen in de moderne wereld staat, de classis of synode die steeds maar weer richtlijnen voorschotelt op binnenkerkelijk gebied en geen tijd overhoudt om de taak van ieder kerklid a la Matheüs 25 te bepalen — ja, vereenzelvigen we niet dat eeuwige gepraat over het kerk-erf met het algemeen Christelijk geloof? Ik meen dat mijn moeder me vaak voorhield: niet praten! Doen! Ik meen ook te moeten concluderen dat ons voortdurend gesprek de "pret" ook niet bevordert.

Had Jezus pret?

Maar mag men in deze ellendige wereld wel echt pret hebben? Iemand vertelde me dat er niet geschreven staat dat Jesus ooit lachte. Maar als de Vader kan lachen, zou dan de Zoon niet kunnen lachen? Kunt u zich voorstellen dat Jesus pret had met de kinderen die tot hem kwamen, dat hij het jongetje op zijn schoot es lekker kietelde? Kunt u zich voorstellen dat, na de ernstige gesprekken met zijn discipelen, Jesus dacht: Hè, even es wat buitelende en zingende kinderen om me heen? Want hunner is het Koninkrijk der Hemelen, waar geen traan meer gelaten zal worden.

Iemand anders vertelde me dat hij geen contact had met een nogal zuurkijkende, op kerkelijk en misschien op andere gebieden zeer verontruste, broeder. Hij voelde geheel geen band met die altijd worstelende man. Nu was mijn "iemand" een werkzaam iemand. Hij zat in een commissie die de school financiëel boven water moest houden. Zo ging hij op een zaterdagavond ook de verontruste broeder bezoeken, die prompt bromde dat hij zeer ongelegen kwam want hij zat naar dat leuke Engelse programma op channel 17 te kijken. "Je mag wel binnen komen, maar geef me even de tijd."

Zo zaten ze beiden naar "The Fresh Fields" te staren. Tot zijn grote verbazing merkte de bezoeker dat er een andere kant aan zijn zuurkijkende broeder zat. Hij sloeg zich op de knieën van pret. Zijn lach galmde door de kamer! "Mis ik nooit, dit program," zei de gastheer, "Kan ik je wat aanbieden?" Het kwam tot een fijn gesprek. De "lach" had hen saamgebonden.

We moesten nu maar es wat pretavonden gaan organizeren. Natuurlijk mogen deze avonden de tweejaarlijkse "congregational meetings" niet vervangen! Veel zingen, en nou es geen psalmen en gezangen. Geen langdurige voorbereidingen ... leuke spelletjes (niet van die domme dingen die vaak onze bruiloften versieren) ... een spraakwaterval (weet u nog) ... een geïmproviseerd toneelstukje. Mensen, wat een pret!

En dan ga je plotseling je medebroeders en zusters anders zien, je leert ze ook beter kennen. De psychologie van de lach werkt bevrijdend en geeft armruimte! En ik denk haast dat u na zo'n avond gaat zeggen: "Dat moeten we nog es doen! Waar maken we ons toch zo druk om?"

Herman de Jong woont in Jordan Station, Ontario.

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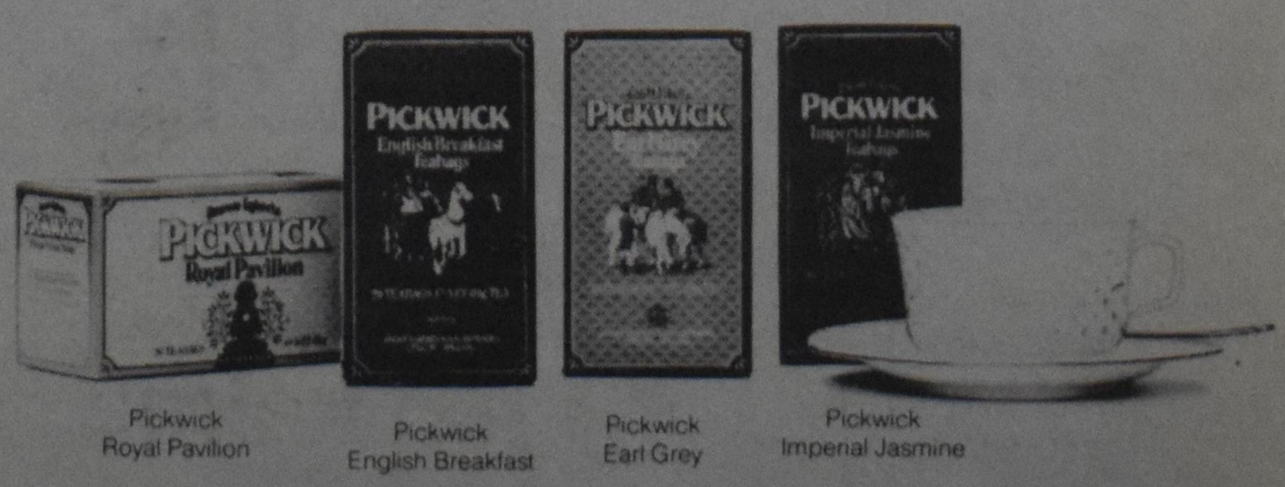

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Books/Meditation

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Marriage

Improving our marriages

Keeping Our Troth, by James H. Olthuis. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986. Hardcover, $18.95. Reviewed by Dick Farenhorst, Ph.D., therapist and Director of Cascade Counselling Association, Surrey, British Columbia.

Though most of us have inherited a wonderful Christian legacy from God-loving parents, our parents and especially grandparents probably never gave much thought to what marriage is all about. Let's face it, marriage meant for them faithfulness (usually narrowly defined only as sexual faithfulness), the father being an economic provider and the mother being a homemaker. These were the expectations that they had of marriage.

We must be very hesitant to criticize them, however, as it is difficult for us today to know the economic harshness that existed for our parents, especially those who lived in western Europe where life was a constant struggle for food and clothing. Marriages were often contracted in the not-so-distant past for economic reasons rather than personal or psychological ones, as they are today in Western societies. Traditionally both partners believed that work and child-rearing were the essence of their marriages and their lives.

A much-needed corrective was given by James Olthuis in his earlier book, *I Pledge You My Troth,* in which he attempted more accurately to define the nature of marriage. Now he has given us a sequel, *Keeping Our Troth,* to help us live out the struggle to be faithful in marriage and thus also remain truly committed to God in marriage. Keeping troth growing through the various stages of marriage becomes his focus.

Five stages of marriage

Olthuis first briefly outlines some of the cultural/social (Western) pressures that make the pursuit of intimacy and troth difficult. Drawing upon Eric Ericson's psychosocial developmental stages of individuals (in which a person must resolve a set of tasks at each stage before moving on to the next stage), Olthuis tries to help us understand and resolve the issues present at each phase of natural marital development. His goal is that we keep our marriage troth not in spite of much emotional pain, but with love deepened as a result of working through these natural stages.

Olthuis then describes five stages of marriage that every married couple experiences, together with our calling to work through the issues that confront us at each stage. First is the *romance* stage, where we must ground our marriage in reality; he neatly suggests that although marriages built solely on romance are shaky, marriages without romance lack excitement or sparkle. Second is the stage of *power struggle,* where we need to adjust to differences. In the third stage, *shifting gears,* we need to de-mask, move away from taking distance with our spouse and meet in the middle. The fourth stage is *mutuality,* where we must seriously work at connecting. The final stage of *co-creativity* calls us to interconnect ourselves with other people, with all of God's creatures and with God.

Our progression from stage to stage flows more like that of a spiral than like a straight line, says Olthuis. When we are blocked in one stage, we need to go back to heal wounds and resolve issues that we left unfinished at an earlier stage. Then we can again move ahead and achieve new degrees of intimacy.

To be ready for marriage, a person needs to have both feet on the ground psychologically, so Olthuis starts out by discussing the issue of self-identity, the need to have a solid sense of ourself.

Not a cookbook approach

The description of the various stages and the issues at each stage is kept from being dull for those uninterested in psychological readings by the flesh and bones examples from real-life situations.

Unlike many other marriage manuals written by evangelical Christians, this is not written in cookbook style with step-by-step instructions. Nevertheless, all of us who are in marriages can read this book, share our thoughts with our spouse and, more to the point, personalize it by openly sharing our feelings on issues that Olthuis raises. Take this book as a point of departure.

If we still remain stuck in our discussions, however, the suggestion is that we get some help. Psychotherapy, marital therapy and marriage enrichment seminars are all options. Why is psychotherapy emphasized? Because it is a sister to introspection — a lost art. In a busy society the discipline, time and will needed for meditation are often absent, Olthuis suggests. The exploration of our inner self with a guide or spiritual mentor is needed more than ever. I find Olthuis at his best here at this level when he views marriage or therapy within larger contextual and spiritual dimensions, when he examines how societal spirits impact on or distort marriage and God's intention for it.

No book can do it all. So here, too, are some limitations. For example, inter-generational issues — that is, our parents' marriages — and how they affect us and our experience of these marital stages are not really explored to any great degree. This omission is particularly poignant since Olthuis sees treatment or growth proceeding from understanding (in contrast, for example, to a change in marital interactions).

Finally a psychotherapist or marital therapist will also glean a beginning glimpse as to how Olthuis proceeds Christianly as a therapist. Perhaps Olthuis' next contribution could give us a slow, long look at that. I, for one, would welcome it eagerly.

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Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

Decision making and the will of God (II)

" 'Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.' Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles." **(Acts 1:24-26)**

How do we make decisions which reflect the will of God for our lives? How do we know which way God would have us turn when we come to a fork in the road?

There are a couple things which stand out in the brief description of that early Christian lottery. First of all, the decision is not made in a vacuum. Peter's prayer includes the knowledge that Judas lives on, even after his death, and has entered a world where the deeds of his life stand in judgment. How does Peter know this? He is merely reflecting the nature of life and death, of physical and spiritual reality as *revealed* by God in the Old Testament scriptures and as taught by his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the New Testament WORD.

In other words, Peter begins with known structures of morality, guidelines for human actions based upon God's eternal norms and values. Where God has spoken, He will not hesitate. Since God gave commandments regarding the value of human life, Judas' action was wrong, and is netting him the outcome of bad decision-making. Some decisions are easier to make, simply because God has already revealed the proper and improper choices.

Spiritual insight

Secondly, within the context of the general guidelines of God's revealed will, notice that Peter and the others are making a variety of decisions which they assume are correct, but for which they are asking no specific guidance. Judas' place among the disciples must be filled by another, according to Peter's interpretation of Psalm 109:8 (vs. 20), even though it seems Psalm 69:25 (also quoted) could easily say the opposite. Again, Joseph and Matthias can be considered as candidates for the vacant seat because the disciples have determined the qualifications for office, and have surveyed the field of possible nominees.

Thus we find that human decisions can be God's will for a situation, based upon knowledge of the larger circles of his revelation *and* the sanctified insights of his people. A fleece is not always necessary, and general wisdom from a godly frame of reference can make wise choices that reflect God's intentions in many situations.

Communal consultation

Thirdly, significant decisions, such as the selection of Judas' replacement, are *community* decisions, actions taken by a group of people rather than just a single individual. For the evil that lurks in each heart, bringing deception beyond our imagination in personal choices (Jer. 17:9), can be counter-balanced by the collective mind of a community where mutual wisdom provides some protection from dangerous extremes.

Fourthly, the prayer of the disciples reflects utter confidence in God's ultimate leading for any situation, even where "bad" decisions might be made. It is a recognition of God's sovereign direction of human history, which gives redemptive purpose to the good that we do, and prevents the evil from having final say toward eternal ends.

Action

Finally, once the decision is made, it is acted upon. No longer is it a matter of wondering if the choice was proper; now there must be a moving forward in the confidence of committed service. Very likely Joseph did not serve God less, just because he was not selected. Rather, a decision had been made, and then it was time to make other decisions. The past cannot be undone. The present is our arena for giving of ourselves. The future is unfolded as new choices are made in devotion to the Lord.

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor of First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ontario.